



# THE CANADIAN FORUM

Twenty-Eighth Year of Issue

March, 1949

## Culture and the Cabinet

► THE SPEECH FROM THE THRONE contained the following paragraph: "It is the view of my ministers that there should be an examination of the activities of agencies of the federal government relating to radio, films, television, the encouragement of arts and sciences, research, the preservation of our national records, a national library, museums, exhibitions, relations in these fields with international organizations, and activities generally which are designed to enrich our national life, and to increase our own consciousness of our national heritage and knowledge of Canada abroad. For this purpose, the government intends at an early date to establish a Royal Commission."

So much nonsense is talked about bringing together the two words "culture" and "Canadian" that many of us prefer to shy away from the subject altogether, and treat the whole subject as adolescent nationalism. It need be nothing of the kind: art and culture are produced neither in a vacuum nor in "society" in general, but by specific societies, and radiate from cultural capital cities. If there is no Canadian capital of literature, Canadian literature will find its capital in New York or London, and so be a branch of American or English literature. This actually is more or less true of Canadian literature. Canada has two arts which may be said to be distinctive: painting and radio drama. It so happens that we have a national art gallery and a national radio commission. At one time we had very distinctive documentary films and a national film board. Whatever the relation between the art and the Ottawa department may be, it should be worth while trying a national theatre, to see



whether Canadian literature and drama would take on more distinctive forms too.

Certainly the absence of a national library is a national disgrace. A library that would stock every book written or circulated in Canada would prevent many students from having to go to the States, perhaps for good, and save expense for many others. There seems to be nowhere in Canada anything like a complete library of Canadians. A national theatre at Ottawa is perhaps not too practicable for so huge a country, though the absence of a permanent legitimate stage in Ottawa has called forth many caustic comments from foreign diplomats there. But a national encouragement of regional theatres and some effort to break the movie monopoly in smaller towns is certainly needed.

Political parties have been most valuable to Canada when they had a specific federal job to do. The Conservative party took the lead in Confederation, and the Liberal party in the period of national consolidation in the first half of this century. Ahead of us, barring catastrophes, should be great developments in culture and the arts of peace. There is a great federal job for some future government. Not, it appears, the present one. To establish a Royal Commission to look into the possibility of doing something that should have been done fifty years

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### CULTURE AND THE CABINET—Continued

ago is, perhaps, timely. There is nothing to show, however, that this will not be merely one more vast expenditure of brains and time and money and organization which will then gather dust in the Department of Procrastination. There is nothing to show either that the present government has the least interest in culture or any intention of promoting so unpromising a means of getting votes. A recent attempt to persuade the government to form a commission to organize a body that would work with UNESCO on cultural affairs got nowhere. The official attitude to literature is that authors' royalties, after the first year of publication, count as unearned income.

No, such a party would have to believe not only in culture for its own sake, but in federal planning, and say so. Mr. Drew's sustained piece of sniping at the radio and television clauses in the above paragraph was effective sniping, because the government dares not say that it has outgrown and abandoned the principles on which his criticism was based. For sooner or later Canada must come to grips with a problem which, as yet, lies far over the horizon of practical politics. This is the problem of a federal policy on education, of some means of getting educational standards emancipated from the poverty, the disorganization and the well-meaning ignorance of parochial school boards and provincial governments. If this happens in our time, it will be as important an event in the twentieth century as Confederation was in the nineteenth.

## THE CANADIAN FORUM

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## CORRESPONDENCE

The Editor: I hesitate to engage in controversy with Dr. Eugene Forsey who is, with the possible exception of the Rt. Hon Arthur Meighen, Canada's foremost expert on the shortcomings of Mr. Mackenzie King. However, I owe the readers of *The Forum* a word of explanation on the points which Dr. Forsey has very rightly raised.

I had hoped that my reference to Mr. King's responsibility to the employers in composing the difficulties in certain American industries during World War I would be sufficient to indicate the nature of the solution offered by the "Colorado Plan." Apparently I have not been blunt enough. In fairness to Mr. King I would like to suggest that any "solution" of industrial relations within the framework of a private enterprise economy involves the creation of machinery for effecting compromises between employers and employees at some level of economic or political life. In proposing the Colorado Plan, which has been tried many times under many names and with many variations, Mr. King recommended that the apparatus for compromise be established at the plant level. As it has turned out apparatus at the plant level is too easily dominated by the employers, especially in isolated mining towns or in newly developed industrial centres. I think Mr. King would agree with this. I do not believe that he has ever consciously and intentionally fostered company unionism. In describing Mr. King as the father of company unionism in North America Dr. Forsey attributes to the former Prime Minister an age and an influence that he has never possessed.

As for Mr. King being a working-class leader, I think I am right in saying that an older generation of trade unionists, especially in the long established railway and craft brotherhoods, accepted Mr. King's advice, and they appear not infrequently to have voted for him. Today other middle class intellectuals hold up other candles in the rising wind, but they should not condemn those venerable lamplighters whose candles have blown out.

In order to indicate Mr. King's hostility to industrial unionism in its early manifestations and to revolutionary tendencies in the working class movement, I stated that he had suppressed the IWW. In a literal reading this statement is, I must confess, entirely erroneous. As far as I can discover Mr. King had no dealings with the IWW,

(Continued on Page 283)

## Twenty-Five Years Ago

Vol. 4, No. 42, March, 1942, *The Canadian Forum*.

The current exhibition of the Ontario Society of Artists is free from surprises and heart-burnings. It is a good 'average' show, which means that it is not quite satisfactory to those who, on the strength of the past ten years, look for something more than the average. For the past ten years have shown us abundantly that if there is a field of Canadian life in which the spirit of adventure is vivid and intense it is the artistic field of paint and canvas. But this year there is very little that is vivid and intense. We long for more waterfalls that run uphill, for good, solid clouds, cadaverous flesh-tints, foul-smelling beaver-swamps, hells-on-earth, and all that is putrid and pestilential. Will some young lady with a porringer tell us where the Seven have gone? We want them back again. They exhibited annually for three years, 1920-22, and then stopped, as it seemed, in mid-career. But they had travelled too far from any safe anchorage to rest on their oars. What are they doing? Sleeping or saving up?

# THE CANADIAN FORUM

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## Cardinal Mindszenty

It is quite possible that Cardinal Mindszenty was, as he admitted, at least technically guilty of most of the charges against him. One of them, treason, is the same as our charge against Communists here: "conspiring to overthrow the government by force." Western reaction and comment to the trial is an inconsistent mixture of several things. We are given to understand that he should not have been tried because he was an eminent clergyman, that he was innocent of all charges, and that if he was conspiring to overthrow the government, good for him. Our newspapers, without intending it, are thus raising the same sort of dust storm propaganda and confusion of moral issues as the Hungarian government.

The reasons for condemning the Mindszenty trial are quite simple, and have nothing to do with his rank or even his guilt. First, there is the whole illegal procedure in which the accused is kidnapped by the police and held incomunicado. The same thing happened in our spy trials, but here all thoughtful citizens, of whatever political creed, saw the insult to democracy in it. Protests were made, questions asked in Parliament, and those responsible for the bungle considerably embarrassed. More important, when the accused were brought to court they got a fair trial and were acquitted if there was no evidence against them. Second, there is the dreadful possibility, and even probability, of torture. The Communists appear to know much more about torture than the Nazis ever did, and to understand how to handle a man so that no external signs of torture can be discovered, while the whole soul and body within have been so destroyed that there is no will-power left to resist any suggestion. It is unnecessary to labor the point that torture and justice cannot exist side by side. Third, there is the whole conception of a trial as a publicity stunt, as propaganda for the government, which turns the procedure into a ritual of human sacrifice, based on the principle that, as Caiaphas said at the trial of Christ, "it is expedient that one man die for the people." This evil thing is coming over here, and while it has of course not touched the courts yet, it is present in the Thomas committee hearings and other forms of extra-legal action.

## Junior League Problem

The consistent outbreaks of juvenile lawlessness have become a matter of widespread concern to the people of Canada. Reports of examples of the most disreputable behavior on the part of organized gangs of young people are becoming almost a daily occurrence in our newspapers, and all kinds of suggestions (most of them crackpot) from swimming pools to restoring the rod are being advanced as a cure. It would seem to be an opportune time to recall two facts, one that we had almost exactly the same phenomenon after the 1914-18 war, and two, that juvenile delinquency has decreased by one third since the peak year in 1942.

These youthful offenders represent a very small segment of the population. However, this small segment must engage the attention of all good citizens and ways must be found to try to lead back to constructive citizenship those who are

now the casualties of war, bad housing, insecure and inadequate incomes, and the abysmal ignorance on the part of many parents and teachers of how to provide an atmosphere of understanding and security for the growing child. For these delinquents, the climb back to creative citizenship will be long and difficult. In some the wounds will be too deep for cure. In any case, individual sympathetic guidance from trained experts together with group activity within their own frame of reference, where a minimum of restraint is involved, is indicated. These young people, in common with every human being, have an intense desire to belong. For one reason or another, and the reasons vary, they have not been able to find a place in society. Therefore in their struggle for personal status they have banded together in order to satisfy that legitimate hunger. The fact that violence against the outer community frequently results is a symptom of their maladjustment and seems to mean that any attempt to fit them into the organized pattern of the established recreation centre at the present level of their development is doomed at the start.

These youthful offenders can only be helped by a penal system where the emphasis is placed on reform rather than punishment and where they can learn how to get along with people. Increased preventive work must be undertaken if we are to avoid new outbreaks. One of the most encouraging features of this preventive work has been the recognition of the work of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene under the distinguished leadership of Dr. C. M. Hincks. The federal grant in June 1948 of \$4,000,000 for extension of this work is a move in the right direction, and it is clear that it is becoming an important factor in reducing juvenile delinquency. Greatly extended recreational facilities under trained leadership must be undertaken, but any comprehensive plan, if it is to be successful, must take into consideration the providing of adequate housing, and income security for Canadians.

Canadian newspapers would be better employed in pressing for the speeding up of the implementation of the Archambault report than in devoting space to the statements of aging cadis on the benefits of lashes and to front-page editorials entitled "Restore the Rod." This is the psychology of vengeance and should not be a part of the thinking of civilized people.

## Public Opinion on Public Radio

Canadian farm people, through the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, "strongly oppose any interference or change in the present set-up" of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. It is more than interesting that a national convention of farmers, meeting at Saskatoon in January, would pass such a resolution unanimously. Another clause of the resolution urged "the public authority to resist all efforts of private interests to establish networks of their own which would not only result in even greater exploitation of radio for private gain, but would also give such interests undue control over mediums of influencing public opinion to their own selfish ends."

Ever since the days of the Aird commission, organized farmers in Canada have backed public control and ownership of radio. The CBC has held the approval of farmers with

the national Farm Radio Forum broadcast, use of highly saleable time for noon-hour market broadcasts (in contrast with early morning market broadcasts in the United States) and what the Saskatoon resolution called "unprejudiced news broadcasts." This forthright defence of public radio comes as a counterattack upon the current Progressive Conservative campaign against the CBC, and as support for the faltering government policy. Prime Minister St. Laurent has said that there may be something in the argument of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters that it is not fair for the one public commission to compete with private stations and at the same time to control all broadcasting—to be competitor and referee too. The point which Mr. St. Laurent neglects to mention is that the Aird commission recommended that a public commission should gradually take over all broadcasting. Instead, it would appear that private stations are more likely to take over all broadcasting. There are now fourteen CBC stations, and a hundred private stations, most of them small but some of them large and powerful.

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture resolution is helpful but it does not solve the basic problem. As its keynote speaker said, the CBC, with low radio license fees, faces the dilemma of not meeting public demand for service or of grabbing more advertising revenue and itself advancing the commercialization that it was set up to avoid. The farmers' resolution did not offer to pay higher license fees. It would seem that, as long as the larger private stations continue to exist and fatten (seventy-three stations with eight million dollars investment had net earnings of two million dollars in 1946), the CBC is likely to lack the enthusiastic and generous public and government support essential to the fulfillment of its function and purpose.

## Mr. Drew in Ottawa

The current session of parliament, being almost certainly the last, is bound to be more notable for party manoeuvrings than for statesmanship; especially as two new leaders are making trial runs. Since Mr. St. Laurent is in the defensive position, the centre of attention is the new Leader of the Opposition. The debates now going on will decide Mr. Drew's political stature; on his performance now, his party will either approach the heights of office or continue on the downward road it has travelled steadily since the Bennett government of 1930.

Mr. Drew is asserting himself in debate with great assurance and considerable effect, giving a convincing demonstration of his ability to dominate a house if the opportunity should come. On the political wisdom he is displaying, we may have some doubts. His attack, for example, on Mr. Abbott for adopting a theory of cyclical budgeting, combined with his prediction that the theory would be flouted in the pre-election budget, will embarrass him at budget-time no matter which course the government follows. His broad strategy is no less rash. Having chosen to pose as champion of provincial rights, he wants to make the last dominion-provincial conference the main issue of the session. His own record in this matter is extremely vulnerable, and he will not improve it by crying "liar" at the many sober analysts who have held him responsible for the failure of the conference.

Clearly, he is staking everything on winning Quebec. The Duplessis alliance is almost openly admitted; the Nicolet by-election is being inflated into a major victory and Mr. Drew is deliberately subduing his own somewhat primitive principles in order to build a Quebec party on a foreign policy of neutrality. Mr. Bracken was hired to save the West, and failed. Mr. Drew thinks he has found a better way. Predictions would be rash, but one can't help wondering.

## Canadian Agriculture and World Food

*Frank Shefrin*

► SINCE 1940, CANADIAN FARMERS have had as a major objective greater production of food. Government policies were introduced to help reach this goal. Farmers, having relatively assured outlets and, in many cases, specified minimum prices, expanded their output. By 1948, however, although there was still a world food shortage, producers in the main exporting countries, including Canada, seemed to have growing fears of future surpluses. So that there will be no relaxation in production co-operative effort is needed among world producing and consuming countries with a view to stabilizing returns to farmers at a reasonable level.

The FAO, in its annual report, has this to say: ". . . the farmer must be assured of fair and stable prices for the products he brings to market . . . If farmers are to be asked to invest in a wide variety of improvements they must have confidence that the products which result will fetch prices that bear a reasonable relation to the costs incurred and will not be liable to violent fluctuations. The case of the minority of farmers who produce for export markets may need to be covered by international commodity agreements, such as the draft International Wheat Agreement, or by direct agreements between pairs of governments. To stress this matter of agricultural prices at a time when world food prices stand so high may seem inappropriate, but the very height to which prices have risen makes farmers apprehensive of the depth to which they may fall, and fearful that investments undertaken now may turn out to be quite unprofitable in five or ten years' time."

Let us briefly examine the current supply and demand forces in Canada and elsewhere. The world food situation for the year 1947-48 was better than in the previous year in every major region of the world except western Europe. But, as the FAO points out, in its "National Progress in Food and Agriculture Programs, 1948," most countries "Seem to be striving desperately, but frequently with very little success, to attain a high degree of self-sufficiency in their agricultural economy. Their production aims too often appear to be motivated more by the prospects of improving their foreign exchange balances than by nutritional objectives."

The most important development in the world supply situation during the year 1948 was the heavy grain crops in the United States. The total yield of all crops surpassed any previously known. Corn production was at a record high of 3,651 million bushels. Final returns placed flaxseed in the class of record crops, along with soybeans, peanuts, rice, pecans and cranberries. Wheat production was exceeded only in 1947. On the whole, nearly 351 million acres of the 52 principal crops were harvested in 1948; this is almost two million acres more than in 1947.

In Canada, output of farm products in 1948 exceeded the 1947 total but did not equal the wartime peak production in 1942. Total grain production in 1948 amounted to 948.4 million bushels as compared with 782.3 million bushels in 1947. The greatest relative increases were in wheat and

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flaxseed. There were less dairy and egg products available in 1948, but there was an increase in fruit and vegetable supplies.

Net supplies of feed grains (excluding wheat) per grain-consuming animal unit available for the 1948-49 feeding season are about 25 per cent greater than in 1947-48.

However, the total supply of food available comprises only part of the picture. Availability per person is another major factor. The world's population has been increasing, and at different rates in different regions. These population increases, over the 11-year period 1936 to 1947, vary from 3.5 per cent in Europe to over 24 per cent in Latin America. As a result, per capita food supplies have fallen more rapidly, compared with prewar, than absolute quantities of food produced.

As regards the energy value of the food supplies, the current situation shows that apart from Argentina, Oceania, Canada, the United States, and a few European countries, the food supply of any single country would be nutritionally inadequate even if distributed evenly throughout the population.

Thus the FAO points out, in its report, "The State of Food and Agriculture, 1948," that the "memorable fact is that the world is still producing less food, less fibres, and only slightly more forest products than before the war, although population continues to increase."

The world food outlook, according to the FAO, will be substantially better in 1948-49, and the general outlook is for the restoration by 1950, or shortly thereafter, of something nearly approaching prewar food consumption levels in most of Europe and the Far East, provided that no markedly unfavorable weather intervenes. However, the FAO survey indicates that in most of the low-income countries the production programs as at present formulated do not seem to envisage any significant improvement over the prewar level in the food supplies available per person.

In Canada, in December, 1948, the representatives of the dominion and provincial departments of agriculture held their annual conference to discuss the Canadian farm production outlook for the year 1949. It is estimated that the spring wheat acreage will be increased over the 24-million-acre mark in 1949, with reductions in rye and flax. Eastern farmers are likely to maintain their coarse grain acreages at 1948 levels. Livestock marketings in 1949 are expected to be slightly less than in 1948. Declines in each class of meat animals are anticipated. Total milk production in Canada may approximate the 1948 estimate of 16.5 billion pounds. The output of butter, cheese and ice cream will probably be maintained during 1949. Egg production is expected to decline somewhat during the first half of 1949. Good fruit crops are anticipated in 1949. There is even some possibility of over-production of such fruits as apples, plums and prunes, and raspberries. The domestic demand for Canadian farm produce in 1949 will likely remain strong, assuming a high level of economic activity.

What about the export demand? Canada is an important source of foodstuffs for the United Kingdom, but since the end of the war exports have been declining. At the beginning of the year 1948, Canada and the United Kingdom had food contracts covering wheat, bacon, beef, mutton and lamb, cheese and eggs. The wheat and mutton and lamb contracts were fulfilled. The beef contract was cancelled about the middle of 1948 and, on August 16, the embargo on shipment of live cattle and beef to the United States was lifted. The bacon contract was increased, but shipments did not meet the original lower figure. The egg contract was reduced by mutual agreement. Cheese exports to the United Kingdom are lagging. For the year 1949 there are contracts for

wheat, bacon, eggs and cheese. The quantity of bacon and eggs to be shipped has been reduced, and the price of eggs for export has also been cut. To a large extent, the reduction in the number of contracts and volume of shipments has been due to the United Kingdom exchange difficulties, although in 1949, as in 1948, ERP funds will help to finance Canadian exports to the United Kingdom.

On the whole, Canada has suffered less from United Kingdom import reduction than most other hard currency countries, since the bulk of U.K. purchases from Canada are products basic to her welfare and production—food, lumber and base metals. Imports of such agricultural commodities as apples, potatoes, canned milk, beef, and tobacco have been restricted or eliminated entirely.

The current shrinkage of the United Kingdom market has focused attention of farmers on the United States. On the whole, current prices of farm products are attractive. Thus, in 1948, during the first ten months 4.8 million head of live poultry and 13.2 million pounds of poultry were exported to the U.S., a record high. Nearly 303 thousand head of live cattle and 81 million pounds of beef and veal, equivalent to approximately 160,000 head, were shipped in the period between January 1 and December 15. Reduced U.S. tariff rates have made this movement profitable. However, Canada's exports are influenced by the United States price support program and the ERP surplus clause.

The first factor is illustrated by potatoes. The potato price support level in the United States during the fall of 1948 made it profitable for Canadians to export their potatoes. The movement across the border became so substantial so far as the Americans were concerned that it was considered damaging to their support program. They were considering the imposition of restrictions but before taking any action they invited discussions between officials of the two governments. As a result the Canadian Government agreed to apply export controls on the movement of table and seed potatoes.

The United States Foreign Assistance Act has a "surplus agricultural commodities" clause which affects the exports of many Canadian agricultural commodities. The term "surplus



agricultural commodity" is defined as any agricultural commodity, or product thereof, produced in the United States which is determined by the Secretary of Agriculture to be in excess of domestic requirements. In the case of such commodities, the administrator of the ECA is permitted to authorize their procurement only within the United States and because the European countries are dependent upon ECA dollars they are not likely to buy such commodities in Canada despite the fact that in some cases Canadian prices are more advantageous.

At the present time and for the purposes of administering the Foreign Assistance Act, the following agricultural commodities are declared surplus in the United States: oats, cotton, peanuts, dried eggs, flax fibre, turpentine, beans, linseed oil, all oilcake meals, prunes, potatoes, wool and flaxseed.

Facts and figures show that Canadian farmers have improved their economic position during the past ten years. Many have done very well and there are some who are still eking out a bare existence. On the whole, in 1948 there was a substantial increase in cash income from the sale of farm products which will likely exceed the total returns of over two billion dollars in 1947.

The outlook for 1949 indicates that prices received by Canadian farmers will likely remain at the 1948 level or perhaps decline slightly toward the end of 1949. Floors have been established under the prices of some of the major farm products. The Canadian Wheat Board announced minimum prices for wheat, barley, oats, flaxseed, rapeseed and sunflower seed. These prices will continue until July 31, 1949. The Dairy Products Board is authorized to support the price of butter, if necessary. The Agricultural Prices Support Board has committed itself to support prices of the 1948-49 Nova Scotia apple crop and the Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick potato crops. In addition, the export contract prices have come to be recognized as minimum prices. Besides dominion legislation and commitments, provincial marketing legislation and milk control boards provide the basis for minimum prices.

Cash farm income, assuming average crops, should remain close to the high levels of 1947 and 1948. Prices paid by farmers will probably remain at the 1948 level or show some increase in 1949.

To conclude:

As the FAO in a recent bulletin put it, "Even at this stage in postwar reconstruction and development, it is evident that market uncertainties are acting as a brake on production, for governments are not going to signal their farmers that the sky is the limit without first making reasonably sure that their increased output will find customers."

Total world output of food is increasing, but supplies per capita are still inadequate; international allocations of some foods will be continued in 1949.

In respect of agricultural products, the shortages in many of the deficit countries have in general become for the time being more acute, while the capacity to export, instead of being distributed among many countries, has been concentrated in a few—particularly in the western hemisphere.

There is at present an absence of convertibility of many of the principal currencies which seriously impedes the international distribution of agricultural products. These difficulties are added to by the foreign exchange and balance of payments problems of many importing countries.

### SAMPLE COPIES

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## ADA: Caucus of American Liberals

*Arthur W. Ross*

► AMERICANS FOR DEMOCRATIC ACTION is the organization which nailed a real civil liberties plank into the Democratic Party platform last July. As much as any other group, it was responsible for cutting Henry Wallace's vote down to a fraction of what was expected. Prominent newcomers on the national political scene (such as Senator Paul H. Douglas, Senator Hubert Humphrey, Governor Adlai Stevenson of Illinois, Governor Chester Bowles of Connecticut, and Governor G. Mennen Williams of Michigan) are among its active members. Readers of *The Canadian Forum* may be wondering how ADA came to be, what kind of organization it is, and what it seeks to accomplish.

Liberal morale in the United States could not have been lower than it was at the end of 1946. It seemed that every problem was insoluble and every question unanswerable. Was there any basis for effective liberalism in a period of full employment? It seemed at the time that the long winter of the 1920's had returned, and that nothing short of another depression could revive the New Deal. If there was an element of wishful thinking in the pessimistic forecasts of unemployment which were then current, this is not difficult to understand. Was Roosevelt really dead? Was there no way to bring him back to life? It seemed at the time that the period of mourning would be indefinite. No emotional recovery had set in and no substitute for his personal inspiration and leadership had been found. If one could neither work with the Communists nor work without them, then what was there to do? To be swallowed up in "popular-front" organizations, or to indulge in futile and reprehensible red-baiting; in either case, to be effectively neutralized and immobilized; that seemed to be the choice.

Eventually this dreadful indecision and introspection began to break up. Perhaps it was merely the passage of time. Perhaps it was the realization that liberals could not hope to swing any weight in the Truman Administration so long as matters stood as they did. The national election of 1946, in which the members of the 80th Congress were chosen, may have served as a salutary shock. Certainly the new Progressive Citizens of America, headed by Henry Wallace, was not acceptable. In any event a growing number of non-Communist liberals in the United States began to feel that there was nothing to do but stand on their own feet.

It was under these circumstances that the ADA was established. The organizing conference, held in Washington on January 4, 1947, was sponsored by the Union for Democratic Action, (U.D.A.) a small semi-Socialist organization which had created no particular stir during its five years of existence. Among the 128 participants in the organizing conference, 32 were labor union officials (18 from the CIO and 14 from the AFL); 31 were board members and chapter-representatives of the UDA; 15 were journalists; 9 were former officials of the OPA, the National Housing Agency, and other government agencies; 7 were Democratic Party politicians (mostly former Congressmen); 4 were clergymen. The organizing committee included Leon Henderson, former OPA administrator; Wilson Wyatt, former housing expediter; Elmer Davis, radio commentator and former director of the Offices of War Information; Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr.; and Walter Reuther, President of the United Automobile Workers. Such a large concentration of "lame-

duck New Dealers and refugees from Washington" seemed a little forlorn at the time.

Today, the ADA has chapters in more than 100 communities and a dues-paying membership of approximately 30,000. It is fair to say that a great many others regard themselves as members for all practical purposes. Its student affiliate (Students for Democratic Action) is the largest campus political group in the country, with more than 150 chapters. Henderson is National Chairman of the ADA; Humphrey and Roosevelt are Vice-Chairmen, along with George Edwards of the Detroit City Council, Hugo Ernst of the AFL, Emil Rieve of the CIO, and Paul A. Porter. Joseph L. Rauh, Jr., is Chairman of the Executive Committee and James Loeb, Jr. is National Executive Secretary.

To classify the ADA as a type of organization is difficult. Unlike the CCF in Canada, it is not a political party, although it might have become the nucleus of a new party had the 1948 elections turned out differently. Most of its election work was done in the Democratic Party, which in the North has always been a loose coalition of amateurs and professionals; and in some areas, such as the State of Minnesota, it was able to exercise effective control over the affairs of that party. Unlike the old Fabian Society in England, it has no original ideas to propagate and no new programs to present. It is based on the assumption that liberals already have ideas and a program, and that the real problem is to make them effective. Unlike the Political Action Committee (CIO) and Labor's League for Political Education (AFL), the ADA is not formally connected with organized labor. However, 15 out of 50 National Board members are labor union officials. It is not a study and discussion group; on the other hand, it is not a mass organization and probably will not become one. It does not represent any of the standard "isms," but it does face up to the major problems of the time.

ADA can be classified only as a caucus of practising liberals, a political action group operating for the most part within the Northern wing of the Democratic Party and dedicated to the rebuilding and maintaining of a coalition of "liberal-labor" forces in federal, state, and municipal politics.

The general purposes of the ADA are set forth in Article I of the Constitution. "We dedicate ourselves, as an organization of progressives, to the achievement of freedom and economic security for all people everywhere, through education and political action. We believe that rising living standards and lasting peace can be attained by democratic planning, enlargement of fundamental liberties and international co-operation. We believe that all forms of totalitarianism, including Communism, are incompatible with these objectives. In our crusade for an expanding democracy and against Fascism and reaction, we welcome as members of ADA only those whose devotion to the principles of political freedom is unqualified."

A comprehensive domestic and foreign policy statement was adopted by the first annual convention in March, 1948. Among the domestic policy goals are federal and state fair employment laws; abolition of poll taxes; an anti-lynching law; equality of treatment in the armed services; curtailment of monopoly in press, radio, and motion pictures; non-discriminatory immigration laws; freedom for teachers to organize; repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act; strengthening of the Labor Department; creation of a Labor Extension Service; long-range resource development; anti-inflation controls; re-enactment of excess profit taxes; elimination of sales taxes; a 75-cent minimum wage; vigorous enforcement of anti-trust laws; use of co-operatives, publicly-operated yardstick facilities, or full public ownership where anti-

trust action is not feasible; farm price supports; food-stamp and school-lunch programs; soil conservation; rural electrification; loan credit for small business; additional river-valley authorities such as TVA; approval of the St. Lawrence Seaway agreement; sustained-yield forestry and conservation of minerals; compulsory health insurance; greater coverage of existing social insurance programs; support of the social security system from general tax revenues; enactment of the Taft-Ellender-Wagner Housing bill; encouragement of housing co-operatives; effective rent controls; and various measures to restore the dignity and attractiveness of government service.

The foreign policy statement asserts that "our pre-eminent power inescapably imposes upon us the responsibility of leadership"; that the basic issues of world peace "are not between socialism and capitalism, but between those who believe in the inalienable rights of the individual and those who do not"; and that "containment [of Russia], though indispensable, cannot by itself produce peace." It supports the strengthening of the United Nations; the European Recovery Program; encouragement of the British Labor government and the Western European Social-Democratic parties; the American proposals for atomic energy control; a large air force; limited selective service (but not universal military training); reciprocal trade agreements, the International Trade Organization, and other international economic agencies; free exchange of information and freedom of movement among all nations; extension of "first-class citizenship" to colonial populations; legislation admitting 400,000 displaced persons to the United States; continuing efforts to negotiate with Russia, but no appeasement of aggression; peace treaties for Germany and Japan, including "enforceable guarantees of an institutional character which will prevent the rebirth of aggression and yet preserve the independence of those states"; vigorous support of democratic forces within the ex-enemy states; decartelization in Germany and Japan; nationalization of the Ruhr industries; aid to Greece and Turkey; opposition to Franco; encouragement of the Jewish state in Israel; and the building of a progressive regime in China.

Thus, the program of the ADA is highly specific, almost *ad hoc* in character. It gives the impression of covering everything which is currently at issue and nothing which is not. ADA planned it that way, for a resolution adopted by the organizing conference in 1947 states that "liberalism . . . rests neither on a set of dogmas nor a blueprint, but is rather a spirit which each generation of liberals must learn to apply to the need of its own time." The current program does hang together, despite the absence of a formal ideology; and there will be no shortage of work for many years to come in putting it into effect. A more highly articulated social and political philosophy would be useful in other respects, however. It would serve as a guide for ADA leaders who will have to formulate specific policy objectives in the future. (Should, for example, surplus crops be plowed under in the event of another depression?) It would serve to differentiate matters of primary and secondary importance. (Should a local ADA chapter embark on a campaign for a co-ordinated transit system in its area at the possible expense of other activities?) Finally, it might help in deciding when to compromise and when to stand pat. (For example, ADA's endorsement of the aid-to-Greece program in 1947, with no real assurance of internal reforms in Greece, was not a useful contribution to American foreign policy.)

Today, shortly after its second birthday, ADA can look back upon several substantial accomplishments. (1) Perhaps the most important of these is that it provided a home for the homeless liberals. It helped them to escape from

paralyzing introspection, self-pity and ancestor-worship, and to have done with nostalgic reminiscences of the thirties. It gave them strength to make a final break with the Communists and (in Robert Bendiner's words) thus brought to an end a shoddy era in the history of American progressivism. Moreover, it proved that a liberal organization can function successfully in the face of the "scorched earth" strategy of the Communists in the field of social movements.

(2) The excellent civil-rights section in the 1948 Democratic platform can fairly be considered an ADA accomplishment. Among the delegates to the Democratic convention, more than 100 were ADA members—less than 10 per cent of the total, but a good working nucleus. Prior to the convention, Hubert Humphrey had released a statement signed by sixty prominent Northern Democrats (including ex-Governor Lehman of New York, Edward T. Flynn of the Bronx, David Lawrence of Philadelphia, Jake Arvey of Chicago, and James Roosevelt of California) calling for a strong plank. When the Platform Committee, attempting to conciliate the Dixiecrats, presented a weasel-worded report on civil rights, four ADA members on the Committee filed a dissenting report. (These were Humphrey, Andrew Biemiller of Milwaukee, Esther Murray of Los Angeles, and Hugh Mitchell of Seattle.) The dissenting report called for anti-poll tax, anti-lynching, and Fair Employment legislation, and for equality of treatment in the armed services. After a vigorous floor fight, in which the Missouri and Kentucky delegations, among others, voted against the ADA plank, it was accepted by the Convention in a narrow vote. At this point the Dixiecrats walked out, and the Democratic Party, against the better judgment of almost half of the delegates, assumed an advanced position on civil rights which proved highly effective in the subsequent election.

(3) The ADA can rightfully claim credit for contributing in large measure to the collapse of the Wallace movement. Its civil-rights plank was important in this respect. In addition, ADA circulated two devastating analyses of the movement, and during the course of the campaign hammered away unceasingly at its vulnerable points—particularly the subservience to Russian foreign policy and the running of third-party candidates against proved liberals, such as Helen Gahagan Douglas of California and Arthur Klein of New York, who refused to condemn the Marshall Plan. Having clean hands, on domestic issues at least, ADA was in a better position to do this job than were the conservatives; moreover, the conservatives were not sure that it would be good strategy.

(4) ADA can take satisfaction in the positive results of the election. Eighty-eight of the candidates whom it endorsed and actively supported were elected to the national Congress and to state governorships. Of these, 25 were ADA members; but even more important was the fact that only 34 were incumbents and the remaining 54 were new. New Dealism in the United States had been living on its capital since the middle thirties and was badly in need of fresh blood.

The weaknesses of the ADA must be seen against the background of these real accomplishments and the real promise which it holds. Nevertheless, there are weaknesses and they ought to be recognized by its members and friends.

(1) A major structural weakness is that ADA is stronger at the centre than at the periphery. It has authoritative big-name spokesmen in Washington, but the number of local chapters which can function effectively (except in the heat of election campaigns) is limited. The entire apparatus is dependent upon the National Executive Committee and the central-office staff; local chapters contribute very little to the formulation of policy. There is a similar weakness

with respect to finances. ADA has had to rely excessively upon a few "angels" in the East and upon money-raising events such as Roosevelt Day dinners and special theatrical performances. Probably less than twenty cents out of each dollar has come from the states and localities.

(2) An intimate association with the Democratic Party and with organized labor has many advantages, but it also creates a problem. Will ADA have to trim its sails when its own program comes into conflict with theirs? The ADA affiliation of many influential members is secondary to their political or labor affiliation. This, of course, is what makes them valuable as ADA members, but it may have a price. For example, the organization has been entirely unspecific on the question of what kind of law should be enacted to replace the Taft-Hartley Act. One can understand why organized labor would argue, for bargaining purposes, that nothing beyond the old Wagner Act is necessary, but one might hope for something more constructive from ADA. Again, the ADA is on record as favoring compulsory health insurance legislation, whereas many unions are in the market for comprehensive "health and welfare" clauses in their collective bargaining agreements. To a greater extent than might appear on the surface, these two approaches are competitive. If a large number of unions were to obtain health security through collective bargaining, covering perhaps ten million workers, much of the steam would be taken out of the campaign to obtain it legislatively for the entire population. One can understand why organized labor would seek to obtain welfare benefits through collective bargaining; but this is not the question. The question is whether ADA will press for compulsory health insurance with undiminished fervor. Other questions of this kind will doubtless arise.

(3) The most serious deficiency of the ADA is in the field of foreign policy. Little fault can be found with the formal statement on that subject adopted at the first annual convention; it looks fine on paper. But the fact is that ADA has devoted almost all of its energy to domestic affairs. Its chief spokesmen are much more familiar with domestic problems than with international problems. ADA has not made even a beginning at a constructive non-Communist criticism of American foreign policy. And yet, unless we are willing to settle for liberalism at home and reaction abroad, there is much which ought to be criticized and improved. The question of the Ruhr industries is probably more important in terms of long-term ADA objectives than the question of sales taxes in the United States. Our position with respect to Franco, De Gaulle, and the Latin American dictators is probably more important than our position on farm prices. It is only fair to recognize that there are substantial obstacles in the way of influencing foreign policy. Less suited to the democratic process than domestic policy, largely removed from partisan politics, and not of immediate concern to any large blocs of voters, foreign policy is a hard nut to crack. All of which means that the line of least resistance is not the line of greatest significance.

Wallace's attack on American foreign policy, although sound in many details, was essentially bankrupt because the Wallace party was Communist-dominated. ADA, being reliably anti-Communist, is well situated to take the lead in a movement for a democratic foreign policy. Abroad, as at home, anti-Communism alone is not enough.

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# The Structure of British Trade Unions

*John R. Coleman*

## III. Industrial Democracy

► "THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT exists to extend the influence of workpeople over the policies and purposes of industry and to arrange for their participation in its management. The claim to share in the control of industry rests primarily on the simple democratic right of workpeople to have a voice in the determination of their industrial destinies." In these words from the 1944 Interim Report on Post-War Reconstruction, the Trades Union Congress rededicated itself to a goal of long standing. The words are but the climax to declarations proceeding without interruption at least since the days of Robert Owen. Their peculiar significance lies in the fact that they were re-stated on the eve of Labor's political victory. In 1945, the opportunity was presented to make something more of industrial democracy than union hall oratory. At last, the sporadic attempts made here and there throughout Great Britain could be co-ordinated into an overall program for introducing workers into partnership in industry.

It remains a very real question whether or not any one overall policy is in fact emerging. Perhaps the most that can fairly be said is that the acceptance of the theory and the oratory still run ahead of actual accomplishments. But immediately one would have to deny any likelihood that industrial democracy will diminish in importance as a goal of the British socialists. It is a tremendously vibrant goal which continues to fire the imaginations of men at all levels in industry and government. The future remains bright.

That the tangible signs of an advance towards worker partnership are disappointing to many advocates seems understandable. The semi-autonomous boards directing the nationalized industries do not resemble anyone's definition of industrial democracy. Nor is there much change in the work life of men in private industry; the instances in which they have been given "a voice in the determination of their industrial destinies" are not numerous. But all of this is only to say that it will take time—and much hard work—to achieve this goal.

Historically, thinking on industrial democracy has passed through four main stages: (1) the early attempts at co-operative communities and isolated self-governing factories; (2) promotion of a Syndicalist program, involving action outside of Parliamentary channels; (3) the advocacy of Guild Socialism, making something of a compromise with the power of the state; and (4) the current phase in which the overriding consideration is that of harmony with the theory of parliamentary supremacy.

Guild Socialism and this fourth stage above, which we may loosely term Fabianism, have been the important recent rivals. The former, with G. D. H. Cole as its high priest, has been spelled out in some detail; but, among the trade unions, the only prominent acolytes come from the Union of Post Office Workers. This union believes that anything less than worker control of the post office will constitute a continuing and alarming "worship of the managerial and administrative class and a lack of faith in the capacity of our fellow-workmen."

The rise of Fabianism as a theory of industrial democracy is a recent phenomenon. As late as 1933, semi-Syndicalism prevailed in a T.U.C. motion, accepted by the Labor party,

proposing fifty per cent worker representation on the controlling boards of nationalized industries. The fact that, by 1945, Fabianism alone drew considerable support must be interpreted as a victory for that philosophy which saw man first in his role as a citizen and only second in his role as worker. It sprang from a basic belief that Parliament was potentially the source for the greatest good and that that body could best perform its functions under the cabinet system, involving notions of ministerial responsibility. The Labor party and the T.U.C. agreed not only that the 1933 fifty per cent plan was now inadvisable but that any direct representation of labor on the controlling boards would be bad. The feeling was that the cabinet minister, responsible for a given department and for the actions of its administrators, had to have complete freedom in choosing the men who were to serve under him. Such men could not carry dual responsibility to the minister and to the unions.

There may have been another important, if less obvious, reason why the trade union movement withdrew from the 1933 and earlier positions. With all their determination to keep the Labor party in power, the unions could never get away from the haunting possibility that political defeat might some day come. And if the Tories take over at Westminster again, these unions don't want to be hamstrung by sharing in the responsibility for running certain industries. They want freedom to protect themselves as they did in the past and to wage war against their political foes. This, incidentally, typifies the caution which persists to this day in the approach of British labor to political action. At one and the same time, the unions want to increase the powers of government so as to achieve their own goals and to protect themselves lest those powers should ever fall into unfriendly hands.

The present situation in the nationalized industries then is this: on each of the controlling boards, there are one or two men who have a union background, but who in no sense represent the unions. Indeed, these men customarily resign from the labor organizations on accepting the ministers' appointments. They may be expected to be friendly to workers' interests, but they cannot speak officially for them. Only the elected union leaders can fulfil this latter function, and the ministers are well aware of this.

It seems probable that this is the system of control which will continue in the foreseeable future. Once one accepts the seemingly infinite British capacity for steady advancement through this type of compromise, there need be little fear but that this system will do the job. In time, all of the men appointed to the boards may be more attuned to socialist thinking than is the case today. But the major share of workers' control at this level will continue to be exercised—albeit in stronger measure—through the channels of the trade union's power in the Labor party and, hence, in the government.

The real future for industrial democracy seems to rest at the plant level, and here the possibility of a new conflict appears. Such democracy might conceivably be in conflict with the tendency towards increased centralization in the planning spheres. That conflict can be resolved only if, as is now the case, the British socialists remain true to their ideal of a society with communication channels of equal importance running upward and downward. Works councils need not clash with the necessity for top level planning in London; indeed, as we suggest later, they may be an integral part of the planning machinery operating within the general overall planning picture. Properly used, works councils may be instrumental in preserving a system of checks and balances within the democratic socialist movement. Thus viewed, it is not the desirability of plant level democracy which alone

increases under the British experiment; equally, the need for that democracy increases.

The problems associated with joint consultation in industry are not, of course, peculiar to the emerging socialist economy. We had recent first-hand experience in many of these problem areas, with our labor-management committees established under the impetus of the all-out drive for war materials. Almost uniformly in Canada and in the United States, these committees died with the war's end. Those valiant men who continue the fight for their revival frequently find themselves banging their heads against a stone wall of indifference and suspicion. The idea has just not taken hold.

Can much more be said for the British experience over the same period? Those joint committees born in the recent war suffered a fate similar to their counterparts here. Probably no more than one third survive today. But there were more significant stirrings which pre-dated the war. Following the report of the Whitley Committee at the close of World War I, top level joint industrial councils sprang up in more than seventy industries. Paralleling this development was a growth in the number of works councils. Firms in the chocolate industry, for example, can now point to a long history of experimentation in this area. Today appreciably more instances of these councils are in evidence in Great Britain than in Canada and the United States. To say that the numbers are greater is not to say, however, that the significance of the individual council is yet greater in terms of the scope of discussions.

Theoretically and practically, "consultation" is rather far removed from "control" (as any good Guild Socialist will hasten to point out). The theory of consultation is that machinery should be provided for the sharing of information between management and workers and for the utilization of worker suggestions to promote the efficiency of the productive organization. Thus, it gives a worker "a feeling of his own worth" and introduces change in industry with the advance knowledge—and approval, where possible—of the workers and their representatives.

In practice, consultation has placed considerably less emphasis upon tackling any of the major problems associated with production and considerably more emphasis on promoting a general atmosphere of good will. ("You see, management and labor *can* sit down together and solve their problems.") From plant to plant, the general pattern of council meetings is traced out by attention to those minor details of daily operations which are potential sore-spots, but which involve no issues of management prerogatives or basic union ideology. One trade union leader summed up the work of a particular council in words which were rather typical. "Yes, it does a good job," he said, "if you consider that checking on the supply of soap in the women's washroom is important. Maybe this is what industrial democracy is all about—removing the everyday pin-pricks from our lives."

Viewing this from the management side, this may indeed be the most desirable meaning for industrial democracy. Discussing the soap question with employees may remove a potential source of disgruntlement, without throwing the door open to unwelcome invasions of more important managerial functions. What most management men appear to want from the worker representatives is an awareness of the company's problems and a willingness to use their prestige in selling the need for greater production to their fellow workers. Clearly, this involves no sharing of executive powers. However, it should be added that, where works councils are operating at all, the major share of credit goes to these same management men. It appears to have taken

their planning and their enthusiasm to keep most of the councils from early deaths.

The use of works councils as channels of exhortation but not of executive action may be cited as one reason why labor has failed to enter into them with an equal amount of enthusiasm. But beyond this, there is the apathy, if not outright opposition, in certain unions towards any direct participation by union leaders in works councils. The reason for this is the indoctrination picked up in years of battling with management for every worker gain; if one begins by assuming that the employer is a continuing enemy, then collective bargaining and participation don't mix. The result in these cases is that the worker representatives, while belonging to the union, are frequently "on their own." They carry into meetings neither the prestige nor that extra skill and information possessed by the union leaders. This separation of powers on the labor side, accented by the inexperience of most workers in discussing technical questions or broad policy matters, has placed worker representatives at a decided disadvantage. Frequently they do not, as one Labor leader phrased it, "know the right questions to ask."

Three possible implications may be suggested relevant to the policies of those unions which want a sharp line drawn between collective bargaining and works councils. First, in the absence of other institutions as well equipped as the unions to do the required research and educational work, workers will be seriously handicapped in their attempts to broaden their vision. Specific education through union channels in understanding and appraising the issues which might conceivably come before the councils will in this sense be tantamount to education for democracy.

Secondly, where the works councils are successful without a formal tie-up with the union, valuable prestige may be drawn away from the collective bargaining agency. In particular, this will be true if a national wages policy imposes further restrictions upon the bargaining area.

Thirdly, the present economic crisis perhaps accents what can only be even more obvious in the future: there is no meaningful distinction which can be drawn between wages and hours on the one hand and production on the other. As part and parcel of the same problem, it may well be that they can only be effectively approached by means of unified machinery.

Joint consultation today enjoys high prestige on paper, if not in practice. Not only the Labor party endorses it, for prominent Tories and Liberals are on the new bandwagon. The Conservatives, in their Industrial Charter of 1947, specifically advocate consultation as a basic tenet of economic democracy. There is little question but that the number of works councils will increase steadily over the next few years. Conceivably, legislation—ill-advised though it may seem—might make consultation compulsory, and the theory will then command universal lip service if nothing else.

Whether or not joint consultation becomes more than that is going to depend on the working people themselves and on their unions. If they decide that they do not wish to tackle anything beyond the pin-prick problems, then this is as far as council activities will extend. If, on the other hand, they want to make of works council media for the fullest expression of worker thinking on industrial problems, the task ahead of them is a more complicated one. Programs of research and education, plus continued pressure on old line managements, seem now to be the fundamental prerequisites to effective extensions in the consultation areas.

What are the limits within which plant level industrial democracy must apparently operate? The real crux of this

problem is stated in a recent Fabian research pamphlet, *Management By Consent*. The thesis is advanced there that the task of managing, the actual carrying out of decisions, will not be fundamentally altered no matter what type of society we build. This task parallels that of the executive branch of government and would appear to lie beyond the feasible area of joint control. But the legislative and judicial functions, making policy decisions and adjudicating disputes arising under policy execution, offer the challenging areas within which labor and management might expect to act as partners.

Isolated, current instances of works councils point the way in which such management by consent may be worked out. A metal-working firm in London is a particularly good example of an effective division between legislative and judicial functions, handled by the works council, and the executive function which remains in management's control. No other experiments in industrial democracy seem more crucial than cases such as this one. It is in this type of social laboratory that the full potentialities and limitations of worker partnership are being tested. These few plants represent the real hopes for the future.

One limiting condition on industrial democracy is already obvious. Anything which is done by an individual works council must be done within the framework of national government policy. The alternative to this is a corporate state advancing the welfare of one firm or of one industry at the expense of the general community. British socialism is founded upon the precept that the public interest comes first. Accepting such a philosophy, it is patent that workers' control contains not only democratic seeds, promoting the worth of the individual, but also undemocratic seeds, in the sense of possible frustration of majority will by the powerful few. At the top level in the nationalized industries, the system of control is intentionally non-Syndicalist to prevent the growth of the undemocratic seeds. That same end is attainable at the works level through action within the framework of policy decided upon in Parliament.

Perhaps it was obvious to many men that democratic socialism would not bring with it immediate industrial democracy. But the term "many men" must exclude, among others, those miners who expected that Vesting Day for the coal industry would see an entirely new management class, made up of their fellow workers. The promise of industrial democracy has been dangled before the eyes of these and other workers for many years. Now the promise can be given the sort of fulfilment suggested above. Slowly from the confused but encouraging stirrings throughout industry generally, the opportunities are emerging to effectuate the plans of those who accept industrial democracy as an adjunct of broader democratic rights for the individual within the community.

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## Sub-Arctic Seasoning

*John Nicol*

### II

► HANGING A LANTERN in a window of the empty fur-shed draws the Eskimos quickly—they love a dance. A woman idles over the keys of a concertina; others squat beside her, stoical madonnas wreathed in grime and tobacco smoke, frequently putting an ever-present infant to nurse. Little girls wander about carrying an extra child in shawls looped over thin shoulders—the little ones are tossed and shaken but sleep just as soundly for it. Small boys, like their brothers everywhere, strut and shuffle back and forth in time to the warming music. The men grin and chatter and stand by in high and non-alcoholic spirits. Then, the music skirls louder, the men choose partners, the boys leap for places on the ladder leading to the loft, and four couples meet in the middle of the little room: the men are boisterous—the women slip quietly in and through the pattern of the dance, grave and unsmiling.

Successive tunes are very familiar: though slurred a little now in their years of adaptation, the natives whirl and stamp vigorously to "My Love is but a Lassie Yet," "The Campbells are Coming," and other Scottish toe-ticklers. The reels, tunes, and sporadic "Hoots!" no doubt accompanied generations of Post managers from their native land; but the momentum is surely the legacy of those New England whalers who cleared the Bay of whalebone at the turn of the century and incidentally made a visible impression upon the native stock. The dance pounds on for nearly thirty minutes, a test of physical endurance, heating the dancers and the building in double-quick time. To anyone exposed since early youth to the "Listerine" advertisements, the dim light, the thick ripe smell of seal-oil clinging to native clothing, and a hacking procession of bronchial coughs and sputum, result in itching and some slight discomfort mentally.

Our city-bred cook, who now has grown a beard and carries a rifle everywhere outside the kitchen, readily joined in the frolic—one can't collect too many experiences against the day that he returns to regale the stay-at-homes with stories in the neighborhood "local." His willingness to perform was translated to the natives; a worn woman was nominated to take him in hand and teach him the art; and he cast off. Possibly our boy figured on standing through the program in approximately the same position, hopping up and down to indicate participation, shouting occasionally to demonstrate zeal: this was an error in judgment. No sooner did the concertina set the dancers on their way again and Cook clear his throat and lift his feet for the first tentative hops, than his withered but wiry partner, wiping her nose on the back of her hand, clutched the astonished novice by the wrists and snapped him into play. For the next never-ending half-hour, our hero looked like the end man in a youthful game of "Crack-the-Whip"; he later reported no clear recollection of anything but sustained collision, interrupted by fluttering moments of near-soaring flight. The Eskimos enjoyed themselves, the spectators kept themselves busy howling encouragement, the centre of attention grinned fixedly and saved his breath: after another set-to in proof of his mettle, he went early to bed.

This is more than could be said for the children, for they are underfoot like puppies at all hours, and presumably sleep like the latter in brief snatches under a block of snow. But the native youngsters are like their fathers in being helpful, likeable and honest—our friendships are cemented liberally with imported chocolate-bars and mutually unintelligible

conversations. Arrangements for their eventual marriage are concluded by the families concerned while the children are still very young. The period of growing-up is spent in active preparation for maturity: the girls early become little drudges about the house; the boys develop by practice into an adult knowledge of survival in these northern wastes. The world outside contributes to their upbringing in the person of a Roman Catholic missionary priest, a good-hearted man and native Frenchman; with nearly twenty-five years' service in the Canadian Arctic to his credit, the Father assures transients like ourselves that the first twenty-one years were the most difficult. He serves his converts in one part of the church building, lives in modest quarters in the rest, and spends his off-hours manufacturing wine for his guests: the raisin-brandy is considerably over-proof.

What the children learn in the padre's school is designed to assist them as Eskimos, not make them foreshortened versions of more prosperous neighbors. Most of them acquire facility therefore in writing syllabics—a series of phonetic symbols adapted to their language. With this, they mark their boats, label their belongings, and communicate with relatives hospitalized in Winnipeg. Other than that, there is not much that sticks, for lack of practical application: anyway, it is decidedly a very democratic school. The Father reports that he rings the bell for attendance when he thinks of it, the children come if they feel like it, they are taught whatever they elect to study, for just as long as they choose to hear it—naturally, they dismiss when the mood takes them. It is all "ver' democratic!"

(To Be Continued)

## "The Land of Opportunity"

### *Marie Garon*

► CANADA is the land of opportunity. Canada is today the third largest industrial nation and the fourth exporting power of the world. Canada has unlimited natural resources, and so on, and so forth, and so what?

Words, mere words, when one knows that, in 1946, 69 per cent of Canada's workers paid income tax on earnings of two thousand dollars and less.

For females, the situation is hopeless. Even if a Canadian girl is endowed with the brains of a Dorothy Thompson, the charm of Ingrid Bergman, the grace of Rita Hayworth and the wisdom of Dorothy Dix, she is shackled and tied to a maximum salary of fifty dollars weekly, which is considered tops by nearly every boss in every organization from Halifax to Vancouver.

No doubt, this is the reason why, offhand, it is impossible to name one outstanding world-famous actress, dancer, model, singer or columnist now living in our great Dominion. A few women authors have made the grade, but in order to get their books placed on the list of best-sellers these had to be published in the United States. Our smartest girls have moved south of the border, and in front of every U.S. immigration door are queues of alert, ambitious Canadians eager to relinquish their recently acquired so-called citizenship in exchange for jobs paying money, cash money, thick folding money . . . and who would blame them?

Four careers are open to the average well-educated female who does not aspire to shine in the limelight:

Teacher? 'Nuff sed about that profession.

Salesgirl? One in a thousand becomes a buyer.

Nurse? Not everyone likes blood and guts.

Business career? Aha! Business colleges are peppered all over the city, turning out secretaries who, with a few exceptions,

will forever remain stenographers. A secretary is that rare specimen, that super-creature who works for one man only and, theoretically, should not endorse a weekly salary cheque made out for less than forty dollars. A stenographer is something else again . . . a beast of burden who "makes herself generally useful"; in other words, takes dictation from every man in the office from the office manager to the lowest clerk, answers telephones, buzzers and callers, copies and files specifications, contracts, reports; delves into an ever-overflowing workbasket and wonders why she keeps on thinking of King Canute dabbing away at the ocean with his tiny spoon.

After several years of hard-earned experience, when the "chance for advancement" so glowingly described by the personnel manager had failed to materialize, and overtime every third night for seventy-five cents supper money promised nothing but a nervous breakdown, one brave forty-a-week creature decided to make a change "to improve her position"—marched in to the executive and professional division of the National Employment Service and was given one single lead to a harassed gentleman who didn't need a secretary but merely an experienced dictaphone operator willing to type letters and shave cylinders the day long. "So sorry, Miss, that the position was not suitable. Keep on calling us. Perhaps next month something will turn up"—and that was that.

Telephone calls to two of Montreal's executive placement bureaus revealed the fact that women need not apply. "We place only men, Miss. It is regrettable. Something should be done about it, but in the meantime, that's the way things are."

The advertisements in the daily papers were exciting. For instance: "Opportunity for a young lady (age 18 to 25) with ability and experience, anxious to work in congenial surroundings at a good salary with prospects of advancement. Phone . . ." The "prospects of advancement" had an ominous sound. However, said the young lady over the line: "I've read your advertisement and I should appreciate a personal interview. Five years' experience, bilingual, twenty-four years of age, not unattractive, high school graduate, considered efficient, speedy and capable, I believe I could be of service to your company." "Indeed, yes, Miss, but would you mind letting me know your religion?"

"Goodness gracious!" said she, in utter bewilderment. "Please don't tell me I've got to be religious too!"

"Why, certainly, it is most important. In my home, I would not dream of employing a domestic who was not deeply religious. She might disappear with the silver. In the case of an office employee, she could make off with the petty cash. Furthermore, we must be careful not to hire any persons who are not of the proper race or faith."

"Well, if the remuneration were satisfactory, I suppose I could settle for the brand of religion that you prefer. Which is it?"

"My dear young lady, I do not approve of your somewhat facetious attitude concerning this important matter. Good-afternoon."

More ads reading: "Good health important," "Hours 9 to 6," "North end . . . east end of City," "Must not object to working occasional nights, Sundays and holidays," "Brilliant prospects for advancement," etc., etc., which all boiled down to \$25.00-\$35.00 weekly (less income tax and Unemployment Insurance) . . . but a huge increase in the dim and distant future.

"How do you manufacturers expect to sell your gadgets and your clothes to female workers when you pay them just enough to meet the daily cost of three meals and a bed?" inquired the disgusted applicant.

"That's none of your business, Miss, but anyway, our firm pays as good wages as all the others. We're not at war now and conditions are different. We must consider our costs."

"I believe you, sir, yes, indeed I do, but isn't it sad that when your pretty, latest model frocks are displayed in our department stores, so many of us will simply look at them and walk away. Thank you for the interview, but I couldn't exist on \$25.50 a week. Good-bye."

The "Domestic Help Wanted" columns solved the problem. Who could resist "own room with bath and radio, charwoman kept, laundry sent out, Sundays and evenings free, wages \$85.00 monthly"? A tricky maid's uniform provided a completely "New Look" for the girl who loves and does not wish to leave her country. After all, she does enjoy the four seasons.

## O CANADA

Even today, it is said, there are certain compensations for being rich, but I must say, having read Mr. Shaw's account of the way in which the rich are waylaid and robbed by the state, I would not care to take the risk of being one of them.

(Robert Lynd, in the Regina Leader-Post)

Bank manager with 2 children requires house. Will be able to arrange all cash.

(Classified advertisement Globe and Mail)

Mr. Bona Arsenault: The reason for this amendment is to promote the learning of both official languages of our country, by Canadians of both English and French extraction, especially among those who seek positions in the civil service. Therefore this bill, if enacted into law, would be a contribution to better understanding between French and English speaking Canadians, and the means of promoting national unity.

Mr. T. L. Church: That is contrary to the British North America Act, is it not?

Hansard, January 31st, 1948

It's a Woman's World . . . A world of club "do's," of charity work, of days spent shopping downtown . . . a world that needs very specially styled fashions to fit into your busy and ladylike lives . . . a world that needs dresses like any one of these . . . exclusives, beautifully styled in fine quality rayon crepes . . . flattery you'll find only in Simpson's Marlene Shop . . . a woman's world of fashion.

(Advertisement, Globe and Mail)

I should like to assure every customer of every bank of our great appreciation for their confidence, their loyalty, and their sane immovability in the face of the winds of doctrine which from time to time beat about their ears.

(An address by

Robert Rae, President, The Canadian Banker's Association)

He [William M. Cottingham (UN, Argenteuil)] said: "It is no idle boast to affirm that if ever freedom, stability, security, prosperity, disappear from every other country in the world, they will still be found alive and thriving in the Province of Quebec." (Globe and Mail)

This month's prize of a six month's subscription goes to S. H. Morrison, Regina, Sask. All contributions should contain original clipping, date and name of publication.

## Emile Nelligan

R. Chauvin

► THE NINETIES were gay days in Montreal. Poetry made more rapid advances then in ten years than it has since in twenty. Enthusiasm for art was widespread and of the better sort: it aimed at production. Student writers began to meet and discuss. The group grew and, typical of French Canada, organized itself into a society. It was called the Literary School of Montreal and held meetings in the recorder's court (the recorder being a kindly, and poetic soul) and later in the Château de Ramezay.

This school professed no common dogma; rather, its members (Louvigny de Montigny, Charles Gill, Jean Char-

*An appreciation of one of Canada's greatest poets, yet one still unknown to many English-Canadian readers.*

bonneau, Albert Lozeau) were agreed solely on reaction to the earlier Patriotic School of Quebec. This reaction sprang, of course, from boredom, but also from the discovery of new sources of inspiration. The Quebec poets of 1860 had been disciples of Hugo or Lamartine; in 1895 Montrealers followed Baudelaire, Verlaine, Héridé. As Canadians seem to be born imitators, at that time as always, change in taste was accompanied by change in style.

Organization frequently hinders intellectual activity—especially literary discussion with a creative end. At any rate, the School of Montreal disbanded after only five years. By that time, no doubt, cultural idealism had been dealt its usual blow: in order to live, poets became librarians, lawyers or even notaries. The school, however, had stirred many ambitions and experienced proud successes—especially so on the night its youngest but most gifted member, Emile Nelligan, had read aloud in Ramezay his "Romance du vin."

Opposition to the new school was fierce. Admirers of Hugo, Crémazie and Fréchette criticized the younger poets in print, and bitterly. This "Romance du vin" might be considered a species of "credo": it conveys the school's ideal, its passion for art (sometimes carried to art for art's sake), and Nelligan himself, his incurable sadness, despair, hate of the bourgeois. Nelligan's reading of the poem met with an ovation, a rare thing indeed for French Canada.

But the school ceased meeting only six months later, and Nelligan himself was to disappear shortly. Maladjustment had reached a peak. He had already abandoned his B.A. course, was loth to apply for any work, and lived for the day when his poems would be published in Paris and would startle his own country into admiration. He shut himself up in his room and there, like another youthful poet, Rimbaud, fell prey to apocalyptic visions. Moral suffering deliberately cultivated led to madness. Nelligan's career ends at the age of twenty-one.

His poems were collected, prefaced and published by the critic, Louis Dantin, in 1903.\* Dantin published only those poems he personally esteemed worthy of Nelligan. Today many of us regret this choice. Dantin excluded from his edition, for instance, Nelligan's last poems, remarkable for their tragic imagery. Dantin's remains the only edition of Nelligan's works. The rest of his poems are probably lost for good.

A few more than a hundred short poems, therefore, constitute Nelligan's legacy. They are typical of the Literary School inasmuch as they are lyrical and influenced by French Parnassians and Symbolists. As a matter of fact, Nelligan blended rather uniquely music and symbol with Parnassian rigidity of form. For style, vigor and intensity they are undoubtedly the school's best.

Nelligan was born (1879) of an Irish-Canadian father and a French-Canadian mother—a mixture comparable only to a hasty concoction of whiskey and wine. Nelligan's nature was just as fiery. He was inclined to spleen, nostalgia and despair, but he gave the spur to them for literary purposes. With true Irish passion he made of poetry life itself, not its epiphenomenon. This process, of course, proved fatal. Dantin informs us that Nelligan often stated: "I will go mad . . . like Baudelaire."

Precocious reading shaped Nelligan's character. However, this morbidity cannot be reckoned as wholly literary.

\*Fourth and latest edition: Fides, Montreal, 1945.

Nelligan felt truly the grandeur and nakedness of death. Unrequited love, extreme maladjustment to society and ailing introversion accentuated his longing for the beyond—which, characteristically, Nelligan imagines suffused with sweet Cecilia's music.

None of this hints at the child in Nelligan. But Nelligan is adolescence typified, in its excesses as in its flashes of depth: his idealistic love, his tender filial devotion, his terrestrial or imaginative notion of the beyond. Nelligan's poetry is never light or even gay, but the reader catches in the midst of despairs, hates and nostalgias, glimpses of an innocence and candor as touching as Rimbaud's. The reader is then deeply moved, for he has Nelligan's own tragedy, that of having been unable to reconcile his own purity with the lesser purity of our world:

Sur le jour expirant je n'ai donc pas pleuré,  
Moi qui marche à tâtons dans ma jeunesse noire.  
(Romance du vin.)

Or, in striking imagery:

J'aperçois défilier, dans un album de flamme,  
Ma jeunesse qui va, comme un soldat passant,  
Au champ noir de la vie, arme au poing, toute en sang!  
(Devant le feu.)

Nelligan cared little for ideas. His poems are packed with emotion and imagery. It is this quality which makes him stand out among Canadian poets. However, had Nelligan cultivated ideas as carefully as he did emotions, he might have arrived at a wider scope. He falls short of sustained tension, the depth and unflinching originality of Baudelaire, or of the vastness of Rimbaud. Nevertheless, for impeccability of form and compactness of poetic matter, Nelligan deserves a place in an anthology of the best French-speaking poets.

Helpless in the St. Jean-de-Dieu asylum, Nelligan remained long a symbol of true poetry. Other members of the school of Montreal did not seek to imitate his style, but for many years, that is, until Nelligan's death in 1941, several of them visited him every week. They were paying homage. Canadian poets seldom seek inspiration in their elders (an age-old habit which will be hard to uproot), but had Nelligan's message been completed, no doubt it would have become a Canadian classic. As it is, poets since 1900 usually study Nelligan's masters, the Parnassians and Symbolists, or twentieth century writers. Notwithstanding, I do believe that Nelligan made an important contribution to our country's literature. He was the most gifted of French Canada's poets. He is one of our chosen few who can be entrusted in the hands of the young for the development of poetic taste.

## On the Air

*Allan Sangster*

*Key West, Florida.*

► ANYONE WHO THINKS that the CBC is not doing the best job in radio in these two countries (and probably Cuba) is, in a word, crazy. Anyone who thinks that a return to unbridled commercial radio would be A Good Thing (except for those equipped to make profits from radio) is deliberately blinding himself to the facts. Let him remember the chaos that eventually, but not soon enough, gave birth to the Aird Commission, its report, and The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. If his memory does not extend back so far, let him come over here and put in

a few hours listening, as I have been, to the fullest flowering of private enterprise radio as exemplified by American broadcasting.

Here in this southernmost city of the union one is perhaps a little worse off for radio fare than in some of the larger centres, for Key West, in addition to being southernmost, is certainly the most insular, and one of the most provincial (despite its superficial cosmopolitan atmosphere) town in the country. But that makes little difference to radio. The local station here is a Mutual outlet and brings me, like a breath of sweet Canadian corn, Bert Pearl and The Happy Gang. Here, oddly enough, this most popular Canadian program serves as a vehicle for plugging The American Way of Life. Aside from one local station with its hint of nostalgia, reception in the keys is good and even a tiny set brings in many stations, including at least one outlet for each of the major networks. In especial the Miami stations come thundering in, so that one has always a choice of WGBS (Columbia); WQAM (ABC); and WIOD (NBC). When I first came here in 1937 WIOD always suffixed its call letters with "Wonderful Isle of Dreams," but this horrid, florid piece of Floridian conceit has, happily, been abandoned.

The big network shows are, of course, the same as we hear in Canada, either from nearby American outlets or, sponsored, on the CBC networks. The alleged humor, the drama, the light music—pure entertainment for the masses, unalloyed escapism for all—are here, and if you like them you may have them in the greatest abundance. But what you may not have, except in uselessly minute quantities, is the solid, thought-provoking, or genuinely artistic fare with which the CBC's program hours is reasonably salted. Nothing is here like CBC's Wednesday Nights; no drama of the quality of Stage 49; little good music (outside of six hours a week for Metropolitan Opera, New York Philharmonic, and NBC Symphony); nothing on a par with Frank Herbert's Afternoon Concert Hour, the afternoon recital period, or Ken Murray's Music in the Morning. Nor anything like Critically Speaking. Here I would like to digress and support Earle Birney's plea for a full fifteen minutes for each of the speakers on this program—there was really no valid reason for compressing these three review periods into a half-hour "package." Let's keep the package, but return it to forty-five minute size.

But it is when the smaller stations are on their own, without benefit (to the listener) of even the loose controls imposed by the networks, that the full enormity of the system, the astonishing rapacity of the station owners, becomes apparent. Within fifteen minutes, as I listened watch in hand, I have heard six different commercials on one station: the shortest ten seconds, the longest sixty-five. Three of these (Marlene Wave 40 seconds; Wallgreen Drugstores 10 seconds; Vel 60 seconds) were jammed together at the end of a period, and since the next period began with another, three solid minutes of commercial blah were thrown at the listeners in a chunk. Do you wonder that I waited impatiently for Arthur Godfrey's amiable nothings to come on?

This listening area is infested, as well (though the stations seem to be mostly in Texas, Mexico, and West Virginia) with the output of the mail order selling transmitters, stations whose program material is almost exclusively music of the Grand Ole Opry and hill-billy type—some of it first rate of its kind—interlarded as thickly as possible, which means after every musical number, with invitations to send in only two dollars and forty-nine cents for "six pair of the loveliest nylons you ever saw" or three ninety-eight for a gadget which, attached to the carburetor of any automobile ("you can do it yourself, friends, without tools") will positively cut your gasoline bills in half. The programs

are strictly for low-brows, the bargains offered would in most cases be dear at half the price, but the stations have been operating for years, steadily increasing their range, power, and rates, steadily piling up untidy fortunes for their owners. Draw your own conclusion.

Finally, since we are only ninety miles, as the crow or Hertzian wave flies\* (personally I'd rather have crows) Cuban stations are spattered all across the dial at (so it seems) five kilocycle intervals, with more rumbas and Spanish conversation than you can possibly tune out. Not only do they interfere with the American stations, but the Cuban radio executive's idea of program building is something which not even the greediest milker of the American channels has dared, or been permitted, to attempt. Roughly, or so it seems to my jaded ears, about two minutes of chain commercials to each minute of legitimate program material.

These might be good things to remember next time you feel like taking a healthy swipe at the long-suffering CBC, or like lending a sympathetic ear to the vicious anti-CBC whispering campaign which the union of private station operators, the Canadian Association of Broadcasters, maintains relentlessly. Granted that the Corporation does not provide as many programs for the intelligent listener as some of us would like, granted that it should provide, at least in the urban centres, something approaching the BBC's Third Programme; it still behoves us to realize that CBC's consideration for the unbrightened minority is appreciably greater than is to be found elsewhere on this continent.

## Letter to a Young Writer Now Dead

*Samuel Roddan*

► . . . AND SPEAKING OF WEATHER, Hillary, I must use the old meteorological cliché and say that it "continues unsettled, with occasional fog and rain." People still ride to work with their jaws clamped and a far-away look in their eye. I really don't think you would find much change from the time you were here last.

The other night some of us were sitting around the fire. We had plenty of cedar logs to throw on the blaze and some good Canadian beer. We started to talk about Archibald McLeish and the speech he made back in 1940 on "The Irresponsibles," in which he attacked the failure of the intellectuals of our generation to understand what was happening to their world. Most of us agreed, with reservations, that many of our artists and writers richly deserved the drubbing they got from McLeish. It was pointed out however that during the past five years an increasing number of books are being published which are advancing the work Arthur Koestler and others started on "the correlations between personal psychology and political belief." Lionel Trilling has recently written a remarkable novel called *The Middle of the Journey*, which courageously digs into the foundations of the political concepts held by many "progressives." I still feel, however, that the isolation of many of our writers from the traffic and friction of the world is as perilous as it was before the war; that a cork-lined study still leads, not to great art, but to the psychoanalytic confession. We tried to raise the question, implicit in McLeish's statement, of just how influential in our society the artist-writer-scholar-teacher is. I don't think we got

very far. Personally I think their influence very small. How many people, for instance, read Malraux, Cummings, Hemingway, Joyce, Dos Passos, Faulkner, T. S. Eliot, Auden and the rest? Or, if they have *read* them, have retained much more than the jejune impression of ridiculous "rabbits" in sleeping bags?

One person pointed out that many of our war novelists today have more political consciousness than those who wrote of the first World War, and the good ones (there have been only a few) do a better job dissecting the horrors of war on both sides. It was mentioned, too, that the contemporary novelist has more hate for the enemy (is that a virtue?) than, say, Richard Aldington ever had in his famous *Death of a Hero*. (You remember George Winterbourne and the debates that raged in literary magazines back in the early Thirties as to whether or not he was a suicide?) I was a little surprised at the statement about Aldington and couldn't quite agree, but on re-reading his book the other day, I was certainly astonished at the pages of indignation he mustered against Roman Catholics, Victorianism, and conventional marriage. However, I think it almost safe to say that our novelists of World War II are on the whole a tougher-fibred group of men than those who produced the love idylls in books such as *A Farewell to Arms*, even though the account of the Caporetto retreat in Hemingway's book is one of the best pieces of sustained narrative in modern prose. I think, too, a serious work on the war must do something more than shock or simply stun us with charnel prose. The great weakness in most of them today is that they move us, not by their art, but by their terror.

During the evening, I mentioned your name as a young writer I thought had shown great promise, but when I started to point out some of the things you had tried to say in *The Last Enemy*\* I was very disappointed to learn that no one had read your book. (I found out later that it is now out of print.) I told them something about you. I hope I was right when I said that I thought your experience before the war did not differ much from that of any other well-educated young Englishman of nineteen. You went to Oxford; visited the Continent once or twice on your holidays; rowed as stroke on your College Eight and read Auden, Spender, and Isherwood. You felt the war worth fighting but you had no illusion about your own effort in making the world safe from fascism. I mentioned that you had been shot down in the Battle of Britain and severely burned, but after two years in hospital ("they re-made his face patch by patch until, as on a used coat, there were more patches than original tissue on it"), you made a strange decision to go back to flying. I couldn't explain how you got by the Medical Boards with your damaged eyesight, artificial eyelids, and burned hands, but I tried to tell how you had come to feel about the Air Force and the gaps it seemed to fill in your own life. I also told them that you "knew" you were getting "it" sooner or later and that this knowledge was explicit in your decision to return. I then explained how everything finally caught up with you on that January night and I quoted the piece your friend Arthur Koestler wrote for you:

"Richard Hillary was burnt thrice. After the first time they brought him back and patched him up and made him a new face. It was wasted, for the second time his body was charred coal. But to make quite sure that the pattern be fulfilled it was his wish to be cremated; so they burned him a third time, on the twelfth of January, 1943, in Golders

\*This takes no account of the Heaviside Layer, of course. So far as is known, crews take no account of it either.

\*Published in the United States in 1942 as *Falling Through Space* by Richard Hillary; McLellan (Reynal).

Green; and the coal became ashes and the ashes were scattered into the sea."

Later, when we had some more beer, we rallied a bit, or rather, called a short recess to look at some of our Canadian novels. Somebody said that they make excellent birthday gifts for Sunday School Superintendents. Perhaps that is not quite fair, but most of them certainly bulge with anecdote, episode, and tedious detail. Very little ever seems to take place inside the skull of a character in a Canadian novel. However, I tried to make the point (through foam and smoke) that one of the great promises in your writing was precisely what is lacking in the Canadian novel; that is, the kind of writing which projects the story by insinuation. Or, to put it another way, writing that is spare, economical, and suggestive, with the implicit understanding that the important thing is what goes on between the lines. I think you had that kind of talent to a high degree. As an illustration, I read out one of your passages in *The Last Enemy* in which you describe a plane crash, and because its content not only assimilates the tragic and the trivial but creates its own internal tension you gave us a fine piece of writing:

"It was after an armament lecture in one of the huts when we heard, very high, the thin wailing scream of a plane coming down fast. The corporal sat down and rolled himself a cigarette. He took the paper and made of it a neat trough with his forefinger, opened the tin of tobacco and sprinkled a little on to the paper, ran his tongue along the paper edge and then rolled it. As he put it in his mouth we heard the crash, maybe a mile away. The corporal lit a match and spoke. 'I remember the last time we had one of those. I was on the salvage party. It wasn't a pretty sight.' We learned later that the man had been on a war-load height test and had presumably fainted. They did not find much of him but we filled up the coffin with sand and gave him a grand funeral."

Finally, as it usually happens around midnight, a husky drunken voice inquired as to the meaning behind the meaning of our conversation and chatter. I guess he was referring to the questions we had started on like terriers earlier in the evening, and then had forgotten for more exciting ones, and about the significance of your own life in times like now. I could only fumble at an answer but I did try to say I thought your life had the kind of symbolism that sinks into the depths of memory, for it stands for the torment of young men in search of a faith and a redeeming emotion: "of a credo, neither sentimental, vulgar or archaic, whose words one could say without embarrassment or shame." You had come to manhood in "the dead centre of the hurricane" and could not find a cause except through the fraternity of your dead friends. And so in the end, you chose between grief and nothingness, and because you were young, you bravely took the latter. I would not say you were right, Richard Hillary, but only now, with sadness, would I tell you that a legend has closed around you, and you have become, at least for some, the myth and the symbol of the new, lost generation . . .

#### RUSSIAN ECONOMIC POLICY IN EASTERN EUROPE

The seven countries included in this pamphlet under the title Eastern Europe are Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Roumania, Bulgaria, Jugoslavia and Albania. The Russian zones of Germany and Austria in one sense fall within the zone. Germany has, however, been omitted because her treatment by the U.S.S.R. has followed entirely different lines. Austria is referred to several times in order to complete the economic and strategic picture of Eastern Europe, but Russian policy towards her has not been described in detail.

Fabian Research Pamphlet No. 128

Order from

CANADIAN FORUM BOOK SERVICE

## Stalag Happy

H. S. Ferns

(SHORT STORY)

► HIS NAME was Telesphore Borne. We picked him up on the edge of an oat field about two miles from Dieppe. He was sitting against a stone wall by the roadside. At first we thought he was a Jerry. When he made no pass at us we figured he must be one of our guys. But he was Fusiliers de Mont-Royal. He could not speak much English. He had come ashore in front of the town where his regiment had taken a terrible licking. But he was not hit, and we could never figure out how he got so far away from his outfit. He couldn't tell us then, and later he wouldn't talk.

"What's your name?" Whitey said.

"I am loss," the guy answered.

"Boy! Some name!" Whitey said. "Loss, eh? Well, you can say that again. Aren't we all?"

And so we always called him Loss. We sat down with him. We ate some rations and we smoked. Then a German patrol came along. They saw us before we saw them. Anyway we had no more ammunition. We surrendered.

The Jerries walked us into town. Whitey and I were sent off with the rest of our bunch. We did not see Loss again until several weeks later when he showed up in Stalag XIIC. It seems that Loss had been put with all the other French Canadians. The Jerries had some idea of giving the Frenchmen special treatment, but the Frenchies had not fallen for this. They ended up in the same Stalag along with the rest of us.

Loss seemed glad to see us. He smiled and said, "What you doin' here, eh?"

We gave him some cigarettes. It so happened that he was put in the last empty bunk in our hut. During the first few days after his arrival we showed him the ropes around the camp. He turned out to be pretty good, in fact one of the best, at stealing coal from the Jerries. It was sure cold during our second winter in Germany. I can tell you we had to hand it to Loss for the amount of coal he stole that winter. If we had had three or four other guys as good as Loss, I figure that I wouldn't have got T.B. the way I did.

However, that isn't what I want to write down about Loss. The poor guy went nuts. He became Stalag happy. A guy in our hut, who was once in the pen at Kingston, said Loss went just like some of the fellows in the pen. They call it stir crazy there.

We always thought Loss acted a bit funny. He never did talk much, but at first we figured it was because he couldn't talk good English. But then we noticed he never talked to the Frenchies either, at least not so as you would notice it. He smiled that once when he first came to the Stalag, but I don't think he ever smiled again. He was sort of dead pan all the time.

I guess that is why he was such a good poker player. Poker was the only thing Loss did besides steal coal, help cook and keep the place clean, as if you could keep a lousy Stalag clean with the stuff the Jerries gave you. Sometimes Loss would play for four or five hours. He never talked. He never smiled. He used to signal for cards with his fingers. Win or lose, he never cracked a smile or said a word.

"Jeez, it sorts of gets you after playing a while with Loss," fellows used to say. "I think he's nuts."

I always figure that talking never does a guy much good anyway. But sometimes you have to unbutton. Loss never did. He used to lie in his bunk with his hands folded under his head just staring up. Outside he never played games. He walked about a bit, mostly he just stood staring at the wire.

This used to worry us a lot. The Jerry guards used to get pretty trigger happy sometimes. When they did, anything could happen. There was once an English kid who had been in for a long time. Before Dunkirk in fact. He acted like Loss. He used to stare at the wire all the time. One night he got out of his hut in his underwear. He was bare-footed. It was winter, too. He stepped over the warning wire. The Jerry guard shouted at him. He paid no attention. He walked right up to the wire. Right in the lights. He started to climb the wire in his underwear. The Jerry guard let him have it. He screamed once and fell down dead. They buried him the next day. The Senior British Officer raised hell. But what can you do? That is why we were scared for Loss.

Sure enough it happened one night. It was cold winter. Jesus, it can get cold in Germany! I had about everything piled on me in that bunk. After a while I got off to sleep in spite of coughing and grunting. Then there was one hell of a racket. I jumped out of my bunk. It was dark. I could not see a thing at first. Somebody lit a match. The noise came from the direction of a window. There he was like the English kid in his underwear. Loss was climbing out the window. Before anybody could grab him he jumped down outside.

Now in a Stalag you cannot go out of your hut after a certain hour or after a warning is given for an air raid or anything like that. But Loss was outside and he was making for the wire.

"For Christ's sake, somebody do something," I shouted. I was the somebody. I was out of bed. I made for the window. I didn't even try the door, because in a Stalag you are locked in every night. I got outside. Loss was running across the lager toward the wire. He is a long lanky so and so, and he sure can run. I put on some speed. For a moment Loss did not seem to know where he was going. He stopped. The Jerries were alerted. Lights were switched on. The searching light got Loss right in the beam.

For some reason or other the Jerry operating the revolving beacon let it swing on. Before he could bring it back I tackled Loss and brought him down in the shadow of a hut. He kicked out at me. I never saw a guy so strong.

By this time another kriegie had got out. He was a big fellow from Medicine Hat. He just slugged Loss hard. We carried him back on the double and stuffed him and ourselves through the window. My chest hurt to beat the band. We shoved Loss in his bunk.

"If he moves slug him again," the big guy said. "And for Christ's sake do something about that window."

By this time the Jerries were going crazy. Some of them started shooting. Everything was lit up like a Christmas tree. Guards came banging into our hut. We had an appell right there. They found they had four too many, and they started counting all over again. We never got any sleep that night.

In the morning they searched every hut. Two guys got thirty days solitary for having coal hidden in their bunks. Another guy laughed when the camp commandant asked him a question. He got thirty days. But the Jerries never did find out what happened.

After things had quieted down a few of us went to see the M.O. who was a pretty decent sort of Englishman. He came to the hut and looked at the bump on Loss' head. He asked a few questions. Loss just stared at the window.

"Undoubtedly the poor chap is deranged," the English M.O. said. "I shall see what can be done on his behalf. Under the Geneva Convention something might be possible."

Shortly after this I was sent to the hospital. I did not see Loss again until some months later on board the German hospital ship *Gradisca* which was taking us to Barcelona for exchange for German prisoners who were, like us,

medically unfit. I was in a deck chair wrapped in a great coat. Loss was standing by the rail. I hailed him. He scarcely seemed to know me. All he did was gaze out over the water of the Mediterranean which is a foggy green outside Barcelona harbor.

It was sure swell to be exchanged. I know I shall never forget the first few days on board the Swedish liner *Gripsholm*. We got clean, new pyjamas, new, clean bedclothes, new, clean uniforms, money, liquor, cigars. There were clean, white tablecloths and steaks, and fruit and real china dishes. Everybody was happy and kind. Some general ordered a drink of Scotch for every man on board.

But Loss did not seem happy. When we were anchored in Algiers, he just stood by the rail smoking and staring out over the water of the harbor which is, I guess, the bluest water in the world. He might have been staring at the wire. I tried to talk to him. It was no use. I hear he tried to jump a British guard, and they wanted to lock him up. The M.O. would not allow that, however.

When we got to New York there was plenty of excitement. The news came to us that the Allies had landed in France. Then it began to look like home with Fords and Chevies on the streets and decent-looking girls everywhere. Loss had a berth in the hospital car across from me. He looked frozen right up. I figured they ought to lock him up.

"I never saw a guy so completely nuts," I said when he was not around.

We travelled all night. In the morning we were running through Vermont up to Canada. The little American town sure looked alright to me. Actually we were supposed to stay in bed, but the nurse was not around and so I said, "To hell with it," and went out into the vestibule of the next car.

Loss was in the vestibule smoking. He was staring out the window at the town.

"Nearly home," I said.

He shrugged his shoulders. The train started with a jerk and a clatter. We ran along for maybe fifteen minutes. We stopped. This was Canada sure enough. Some of the houses had no paint on them and nearly all the rest had lath and tar-paper sides. There was a store near the station. Outside stood a team of horses hitched to a democrat. A man came out. He tossed a parcel in the back and stowed a tin of kerosene with a little red screw cap on the spout under the seat. He untied the team from the hitching post. Then he put his foot on the hub of the front wheel and sprang into the seat. He shook the reins vigorously, and the horses started. Then he slapped one of the horses across the rump with the ends of the reins. The team leaped forward stirring a cloud of dust. The democrat bounced along the road, and they grew smaller in the cloud of dust as they ran along.

Loss was looking at them. Then he sort of whispered something which sounded to me like "Say mon pay-ee." It was French.

He reached into the inner pocket of his battle dress and took out a bottle of whisky. He unscrewed the cap.

"You drink, eh?"

I took a drink. He wiped the neck of the bottle with his hand. Then he drank.

"Dam good, eh?" he said. And I sort of think he smiled.

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## Film Review

*D. Mosdell*

►THE RED SHOES is in several senses a highly-colored and extravagant film about ballet, which falls more or less naturally into two sections. The story proper is about Lermontov (Anton Walbrook), a fanatical ballet-producer to whom "art" is everything and "life" a distraction, his premiere ballerina, Victoria (Moira Shearer), whom he is intent on making the finest dancer in the world (he lives entirely in a wonderful world of superlatives), his orchestra-conductor-composer, a rather pallid sub-hero who snarls up the plot and Lermontov's plans by falling successfully in love with Victoria, and an assorted ballet-company, superbly led by Massine, who behave very well, considering the problems and dilemmas peculiar to their profession. In the long run, of course, Victoria is caught between the "artistic" fanaticism of Lermontov and the fanaticism of her composer-husband, whose egoism dictates a "he for God only, she for God in him" attitude, and commits suicide in a highly spectacular manner, red shoes and all. Lermontov has the final speech and Massine the final dance, and it is all ineffably melodramatic and full of romantic suffering. You will find it exactly the thing to cheer you up in the limp midwinter season of sneezes, bills, and slush; particularly since so much of it is played out against a background of breath-taking Mediterranean scenery, familiar to us until now chiefly through the uninspired color-plates of the *National Geographic*.

The ballet within the film, called *The Red Shoes*, I found entrancing, although from what I hear it has set the purists' teeth on edge. The fable is based on a Hans Christian Andersen fairy-tale about a girl who loves to dance, and who buys from a demoniac shoemaker a pair of red shoes whose peculiar virtue is that they love dancing too. The girl, however, wears out faster than the shoes; she can neither take them off nor stop dancing; dance she must, and so she does, through days and nights and seasons and years, up hill and down dale, and dies at last on the steps of a church, where Death, the priest, takes the shoes off and leaves them to be snatched up by the shoemaker (Massine again, and very fine, too) who offers them once more for sale at the fair. . .

All the resources of the camera are drawn upon in filming the dance, as well as the resources of the dancers. There is no four-square set stage, as in ordinary ballet, with the dancers providing the only movement; on the screen the whole picture moves, background and all, and the camera too, so that several patterns of movement are possible at one and the same time. Moreover the central solo dance goes on for at least fifteen minutes, a performance physically impossible for any dancer in real-life ballet. At one point, too, the audience is made aware not only of what the dancer is doing, but of what she is thinking, and the applause of the audience washes up over the edge of the stage in a sea-green flood. Again, she dances a *pas-de-deux* with a figure made out of newsprint, and with other phantasmic figures in a phantasmic landscape—all part of the cinema's stock-in-trade.

It is here that the purists object. A play is a play, they say (harking back to *Hamlet*), and a ballet is a ballet; both are created with the limitations of the stage in mind, and to overcome any of those limitations on a screen is a kind of monstrous *lèse-majesté*. When (as has been done before now) a stage ballet is filmed, they complain that

the camera cannot make a close-up of a solo dance without losing the overall pattern provided by the whole stage and the other dancers; they are troubled, whether they realize it or not, by the cinema's assumption of limitations which cripple it as cinema and draw attention to the limitations of the stage, which are not as obvious to the human eye in a theatre as they are to the camera's eye in the same position. Anyone who has seen the ballet *Russian Soldier* understands that the stage can borrow ideas from film and use them very effectively; it is difficult to understand why anyone should object to the creation of a cinema-ballet, using music, dancers, and abstract visual movement involving the whole screen, and producing something like *The Red Shoes*. It is like insisting that Shakespeare must always be played on a bare stage, with only a placard saying "The Forest of Arden" and a couple of aspidistras in pots, or whatever. There seems to me to be a trace of good old-fashioned snobbery in the purists' attitude both to Olivier's *Hamlet* and to the ballet in *The Red Shoes*, a suggestion that the cinema is at best a bastard art, good enough to improve upon a presentation of Coward's *Blithe Spirit*, but bound, in the nature of things, to defile anything it touches in the realm of Serious Art. As the man said, it ain't necessarily so.

## Recordings

*Milton Wilson*

►THE NEW COLUMBIA ALBUM of arias by the English soprano Isobel Baillie contains excerpts from some large-scale works by Bach, Handel, and Haydn. One's pleasure in hearing Miss Baillie's firm and intelligent singing of these beautiful extracts (some well-known and some unfamiliar) is only diminished by the realization that they are extracts and by the disappointed desire to hear the whole works from which they are taken. But I suppose that recordings of Handel's operas and lesser oratorios are very remote possibilities, although one would expect Haydn's *Creation* to have been recorded in full by either Victor or Columbia. Most familiar among the arias in the set are the much-arranged *Sheep may safely graze* from Bach's *Cantata No. 208* and *With verdure clad* from *The Creation*. Also included are a delightfully festive aria from Handel's *Samsom*, *Art thou troubled* from his opera *Rodelinda*, and the joyous *My heart ever faithful* from Bach's *Cantata No. 68*. Miss Baillie is accompanied by the Halle Orchestra under Leslie Heward. The arias are all sung in English.

In the process of discussing Koussevitsky's new recording of Beethoven's *Symphony No. 3 (Eroica)* I had planned to compare it with Bruno Walter's, which is the most recent offered by Columbia. Accordingly, after playing over the new Victor set with its clear, brilliant and well-balanced reproduction, I turned back to the Walter set, where, alas, the recorded sound was duller, harsher, and more wooden than I remembered it. So that, although Walter is a greater favorite of mine than Koussevitsky, there is really no possible competition between these two sets. Koussevitsky's performance is brilliant and well-reproduced, except for a little too much echo. Walter's performance is reproduced so imperfectly that its value is hard to assess. It is broader, and here and there might be more moving; that is about all I can say. Koussevitsky's performance I have called brilliant, and in the finale its vitality and movement are more than that. In the first two movements this extra freshness and imagination are missing; some of the possibilities of this greatest of all symphonies are unrealized; one feels

cheated of a greater experience. But the performance still remains brilliant and effective, a good standard set to own. I haven't listened recently to the Toscanini set which Victor recorded about five years ago, but I recall it as powerful and intense with something of the narrow, specialized intensity found in his recording of the *Fifth Symphony*. The breaks at the end of some records are too abrupt and the recording clear but inflexible, again like that of the *Fifth Symphony*. My memory, however, may be at fault here.

The two Columbia long-playing records that I have heard don't give me the right to a conclusive opinion, particularly as they were both of chamber music, but I can at least report that so far I have found their reproduction quite as satisfactory as that of older records, and their vinylite surfaces far quieter.

#### CORRESPONDENCE—Continued from Page 266

and, until the Soviet-German Pact, he had no hand in suppressing any movement or group. He has, however, a record of opposition to revolutionary tendencies in the trade union movement. The facts are these. In 1903 a Royal Commission was appointed to inquire into the activities in British Columbia of the Western Federation of Miners, the American Labor Union, and the United Brotherhood of Railway Employees. Mr. King was the secretary and the principal "expert" attached to this Commission. The Commission was unqualified in its condemnation of the tactics and objects of the organizations which it set out to examine. It further recommended that the activities of trade union officials who were not British subjects or persons with at least one year of residence in Canada be banned under the Criminal Code. This recommendation was never translated into legislation because of trade union opposition. While Mr. King had no legal or direct responsibility for the findings of this Commission or its recommendations, he had indicated in a letter published in his book *The Secret of Heroism* his opposition to those revolutionary tendencies which finally found their best expression in the IWW.

H. S. Ferns, St. Vital, Man.

The Editor: It is most gratifying to some of us at least, in the motion picture industry, to see the careful attention which is being devoted to Laurence Olivier's "Hamlet" by writers such as P. A. G. Gillan who submits a "minority" report in your February issue. His analysis of the film is, however, predicated on an impossibility,—the assumption that Olivier was transferring to the screen a work which Mr. Gillan, knowing it so well in that form, tends to consider in terms of printed pages or, occasionally, as a stage play. The proper title of the film is "An Essay in Hamlet" and in describing his approach to it as a producer, Olivier emphasized repeatedly that "I feel that the film should be regarded as this and not as a film version of a necessarily abridged classic."

The three media in which the Shakespearean classic has been seen, heard and read, are of themselves so different that it may in future be necessary for the sake of clarity to specify whether the book Hamlet, the play Hamlet or the film Hamlet is meant. The techniques of conveying an idea, an impression or an emotion and of telling a story by means of motion pictures make necessary and inevitable that any work, prepared originally for either book or stage, must be changed and adapted if it is to be presented on the screen. The fact that, on numerous occasions, such attempted adaptations have produced results ranging from the ridiculous to the murderous, does not alter the fundamentals involved. When in the early days of sound on film,

a number of photographed plays were shown on the screen, it was abundantly obvious that, whatever they might be, they were not motion pictures.

When the film Hamlet is considered in comparison with other Hamlets, the fact that a musical score becomes in this case a major and integral part of the performance is alone sufficient to illustrate the difference. Mr. Gillan, for instance, asks why "Olivier cut the text so damagingly," and suggests that he was tailoring it to his personal acting style, a practice not uncommon among stage stars. As is usual and to meet the requirements of film production, Hamlet was edited twice but in neither case by Laurence Olivier. The text was edited for the camera by Alan Dent and the film, after shooting, edited by Helga Cranston. Reginald Beck, who was at one time at McGill, supervised the editing. To Olivier, Mr. Gillan's complaint that both critics and audiences in Canada seemed to lack familiarity with the text (of the play) will be specially interesting since Olivier had hoped above all to make the story of Hamlet "easy to follow for people who are deterred by Shakespeare himself."

Unfortunately, Canadians with a most sincere interest in these matters have little opportunity to familiarize themselves with film-making techniques and well-meant criticism, as a result, often becomes completely irrelevant. Since intelligent film producers, appreciating that their work will be shown in countries which they have never visited and with which they may be wholly unfamiliar, are anxious to know accurately critical reactions, abroad, ignorance of the film medium from a production standpoint is the more unfortunate from their standpoint.

James A. Cowan, J. Arthur Rank Organization of Canada, Ltd., Toronto, Ont.

The Editor: *The Forum* is better than ever and as I have this morning enjoyed the January number I have been thinking that it is in some ways the best secular periodical I see. The constructive criticism of CCF policy; intelligent and post-colonial discussion of British affairs; original articles about Central Europe delight me, and I cannot say how pleased I am with D. Mosdell's review of *The Big Fisherman*. H. S. Ferns' study of Mackenzie King was a real "find." My copies always go on to England after we have read them.

(Rev.) Wilfred F. Butcher, Fort Erie, Ont.

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## *Sharp City*

I live in a sharp city—  
A city of wedges and angles,  
Of nightmare alley  
And graveyard tower.  
The city is naked,  
Like steely new rocks of young mountains,  
Both split the cloud fields,  
And both sing power,  
And yet there are moments

When hills that wear green clothes are stronger—  
Because of springtime's  
Slow-dancing shower.  
These steel walls are cutting  
New patterns for men of motion—  
Who lose the seasons  
To live an hour.

*Manfred A. Carter*

## *The Old Oaks Blind*

The dream girls are sleepy in the sun,  
The old oaks blind, the night a caterpillar track  
Across the headland; there is vacancy  
In water, music a hollow arc,  
Diamonds are glitterless and glass no longer sings.

Tall men are lonely on the hills, and babes in arms  
No longer wail at mountains, girls link hands  
To gather garlands in the glaze of noon,  
But their limp fingers fade, and colour-blind they stare—  
The purple skies are bitter to their sight.

Truth, the blind singer, on a tightrope sways,  
Old men with wagging fingers do declare.  
The light of all the world has gone below  
And in this smiling sea, our ship of state  
Drifts rudderless; reeling in outer space, a half-spun moon.

*Fran Zieman*

## *Thoughts on Poetry*

Crouching in medical textbooks—  
“The blastopores of aymorphs”  
In top hats and socksuspenders  
Might christen a tomcat.  
Fascinating stuff,  
Dredged from Macdougall to Freud.  
Hoots mon!  
But O for the wings, for the wings of a horse;  
Modern asbestos upholstery might save Icarus.  
Away with old fashioned buggies.  
Well . . . nearly away.  
Perhaps a little rhythm.  
And no rhymes?  
Is rhyming verse so much worse?  
I mean wheels are still wheels  
Though mass produced in pressed steels.

*J. L. Smallwood*

## *My New Home*

What is moved when the body leaves  
The emptier rooms of the old house,  
Where pictures cement the cornices of the mind,  
And rot like ancient trees into stone?

Now, in this passage from silence  
To frenzied avenues, all the babblings  
Languish the city's grim culture  
At the howling night of civilizations.

I remember the echo of trees and greener birds,  
And the slumber that is the sleep of rivers,  
Without klaxons leaping through hooded heads  
And the silent quiet within all places.

*Harry Roskolenko*

## *The Rattlesnake*

An ominous length uncoiling and thin,  
A sliver of Satan annoyed by the din  
Of six berry-pickers, bare-legged and intent  
On stripping red treasure like rubies from Ghent.  
He moved without motion, he hissed without noise—  
A sombre dark ribbon that laughter destroys;  
He eyed them unblinking from planets unknown,  
As alien as Saturn, immobile as stone.  
With almost forbearance, he watched them retreat—  
A creature of deserts, and mountains and heat;  
No hint of expression, no trace of regret, no human emotion  
a bland baronet  
Secure in his duchy, remote and austere,  
Ubiquitous, marvellous grass privateer.

*Alfred W. Purdy*

## *Reflections*

This concave surface will invert a face,  
Distort the moulded cheeks, split-twist the mouth,  
Disturb the slant-distracted eyes, while brows  
Contract to meet the handle, lose themselves  
In angle-patterns fretted for our pleasure.

So have I seen one lose the self in love—  
A silver spoon held by a child's square hand—  
Being oneself, and yet be not.

### *The child*

Who holds that spoon, what then of him? Does he  
Mark the distortion, mock or pity for it?  
No: for in your hand too—observe how small—  
Is also held a straitly shining strip:  
And he regards his metal-narrowed face  
And wonders at his own wide silver eyes.

*Margaret R. Gould*

## *Line of Argument*

The cuckoo, in its guarded nest,  
Thrusts out the fledglings with its breast:  
Then, sparrow-fed, it thrives, to sing  
A nerved rejection of the spring.

So, in the nest of entity,  
The small, enfringing spirits die,  
And leave the independent mind  
Possessing what it cannot find.

*Margaret R. Gould*

## BOOKS REVIEWED

**THE FALL OF MUSSOLINI:** Benito Mussolini (edited by Max Ascoli); Clarke, Irwin; pp. 212; \$3.25.

This book is not a diary in spite of the bright red splurge and "his own story" on the dust-jacket. Dictators, surely, do not write real diaries; for their aggressive impulses are completely turned upon the world outside them. Besides they must believe wholeheartedly in their own myth, and any attempt at honest self-examination would destroy such belief. Mussolini apparently even believed in the myth of his own invulnerability, alluding to his "bullet-proof skull" and boasting of his many narrow escapes from death. He believed completely, too, in the myth of fascism, and harks back nostalgically to its most "glorious" days. "Who is not proud to remember," he demands, "how we withstood the siege declared against us by the League of Nations? . . . No one can tear out these great pages from Italian history."

But, in spite of such standing of truth upon its head, this book is a very interesting one and deserves to be read (since the psychology of dictators is something we still have to bear very much in mind). It is actually made up of a series of articles which appeared in the *Corriere della Sera* during the one hundred days when Mussolini—after his parachute rescue by the Germans from the captivity into which the King and Badoglio had so suddenly and dramatically forced him in July, 1943 — ruled again for a last brief reign over German-held Northern Italy. Mussolini goes over past events, describes his own political fall, and attempts to justify fascism in its own terms. There are occasional bursts of insight, sincerity, shrewdness and even humor, mingled with the boasting and the lying.

Half the book is devoted to a brilliant introduction by Max Ascoli which puts fascism in its real perspective and explains its phenomenal success. The truth is that "Fascism was fun . . . a hoax played on the nostalgia for greatness of the Italians." Mussolini was a very successful pasteboard Caesar, until he met his Nemesis, Adolf Hitler, who "was not a dilettante in evil, but in a horrible literal sense, evil itself," and the Italian people, instead of playing at war, got themselves involved in a real and terrible war, and fell tragically to earth. But Mussolini, in the course of his career, had accidentally made some remarkable discoveries, from which both Hitler and Stalin have learned much. "He found out," Max Ascoli observes, "that the typical institutions of modern democracy like trade unions, universal education, governmental agencies established for the control of business, can be turned into most effective weapons of twentieth century personal tyranny. Once political freedom is eliminated, the instruments of democracy can be so used as to multiply the power of the tyrannical state. This constitutes the essence of fascism, that is, "democracy without freedom."

Helen Garrett

**THREE WHO MADE A REVOLUTION:** Bertram D. Wolfe; Longmans, Green & Co.; pp. 661; \$6.00.

This book, which is a combination of the biographies of Lenin, Stalin, and Trotsky set against a background of the history of the Russian Revolution, will serve as a welcome relief to the man who desires information rather than propaganda. It will serve as a most sad commentary on the world to those who still prefer discussion to argument. I suggest that *Three Who Made a Revolution* and Mr. Koestler's *Darkness at Noon* offer in different ways ample warning to the citizens of the world's second most conservative country about the price paid for totalitarianism in the land of their political opponent.

The first chapter deals with the heritage of Russia down to the end of the nineteenth century. A picture of intelligentsia living in a void is painted. Dreamers, reformers, and humanitarians were punished for dreaming and forced into revolutionary thought. "Student" became synonymous with revolutionist. Lenin enters into the scene as the son of a nobleman who had won his rank by rising up through the civil service, and as a brother of a would-be assassin of the Tzar. In the biography of Lenin we see a man who lived "revolution" day and night, whose only idea was revolution and whose sole aim was revolution. His idea was to take power and then work out the theoretical questions at a later date; this idea, Wolfe claims, is the centre core of Leninism. When it paid to work with the Mensheviks there was co-operation, and when their usefulness had run out Lenin split with them completely. Although, at some of the early revolutionary conferences, his faction was in the minority, for propaganda purposes he adopted the title "Bolshevik" which means, in Russian, one of the majority. Mr. Wolfe points out that at least in 1905 Lenin had stated that socialism must be achieved through social democracy, but his conception of a strong centralized party seems to have overcome this.

Trotsky is introduced as a brilliant orator and writer, yet somewhat erratic. He saw the dangers of Leninism but decided to follow Lenin. The time will come when "the organization of the party takes the place of the party itself, the Central Committee takes the place of the organization, and finally the dictator takes the place of the Central Committee." Trotsky fell before the Leviathan of his own creation. Wolfe remarks on Trotsky: "In the dramatization of his life none would equal him since the days of Marx's contemporary Lassalle."

The first mention of Stalin is that it was his boldness in connection with deeds of individual terror that first attracted Lenin's attention to him and caused him to advance Stalin to posts of importance. "Today, no one any longer dares to say that Djugashvili was a mere tyro in 1898, an apprentice until 1905, a journeyman revolutionist on a provincial scale from 1905 to 1907, on a national scale to 1917, and a master-workman only during 1917, as part of the collective leadership of many such 'master-workmen,' under Lenin's overseership." Of the three major figures in the book, Stalin appears to have received the most adverse criticism and analysis.

It appears to this reviewer that the most important contribution of this book is Mr. Wolfe's writing on Soviet "hagiology"; on the distortion of historic 'fact' to the extent of "removing" historians such as Abel Enukidze for not having a correct memory of the history of the Georgian Bolsheviks and of the role that Stalin played in the early part of the movement. The chapter entitled "How History is Made" begins with a quotation from Stalin: "Paper will put up with anything that is written on it."

This is not a cheerful book; even the most optimistic of liberals will find it hard to hold out much hope for the present course of the revolution after reading Mr. Wolfe's work. Totalitarianism of any sort takes its toll; we can only hope that the trend in Russia will be reversed in the future; and that the American heritage of the Dies and Thomas committee will not be furthered. Until this happy day, we can only view with alarm the growth of Leviathan throughout the world.

Martin Shubik.

**LAST CHANCE,** edited by Clara Urquhart; S. J. Reginald Saunders; pp. 182; 1948; \$3.25.

Here is a book that should be read by everyone. Miss Urquhart has written a brief but powerful introduction outlining certain problems of the day to which solutions must

be found if civilization is to survive. These were posed as eleven fundamental questions and submitted to twenty-six leaders of thought of fourteen nations. Mainly upon short-term social and economic and political problems the questions include: how can a complete split of the world be avoided? can the US and Russia exist peacefully in the same world? can Germany, Japan and China be reorganized in a form acceptable to the US and Russia? how is it possible to stop the misuse of propaganda? is it possible to create a world where want no longer exists? how may we achieve spiritual and moral regeneration? Where it was not possible for the contributors to reply to each question a message on the general issues raised has been given. The leaders of thought do not include any politicians, economists or sociologists because "their horizons are in the main clouded by fear, uncertainty, often by personal ambition and self-interest" but instead "those men who, in addition to being great philosophers, writers, scientists, are also great men—men who have somehow remained miraculously sane and whole in a world of disconnected and disjointed people." They include Benedetto Croce, George Santayana, Bertrand Russell, J. B. S. Haldane, Archibald MacLeish, Trygve Lie, Karl Vossler and Emil Brunner.

Croce opens the symposium not too auspiciously by claiming "the vanity of replies to queries of this kind." One is almost inclined to agree. Mr. Lin Yutang lets the cat out of the bag when he begins: "This book represents a very important idea, that of trying to bring the men of thought, rather than men of action together." Here surely is the real nature of class struggle today and our one problem: that these two classes are not one and the same. As one might expect there is a broad range of opinion presented: for example, the Bishop of Chichester finds our salvation in a World Council of Churches, while J. B. S. Haldane finds it in the abolition of the class system.

What seems to emerge clearly from the discussion as a whole is that if we could only get together and love hard enough then all would be well, and that somehow Christ is the answer to our needs. Well if they mean the Christ who drove the money-changers out of the temple, there is some real hope for the West; but if they mean the nineteenth-century Christ gathering children about his knee, and if this is our last chance, then we have had it.

A. C. Hamilton

**SPEARHEAD: 10 YEARS' EXPERIMENTAL WRITING IN AMERICA:** Edited by James Laughlin; Jonathan David (New Directions) 1947; \$5.00.

In the words of the editor, James Laughlin, the purpose of this volume is "to present an important historical survey of the significant experimental and advance guard writing in the United States during the past decade." More specifically, the volume commemorates the tenth anniversary of *New Directions* and is composed of selections from *New Directions* itself and from the allied "Little Magazines" which carry on righteous warfare against American literary commercialism.

It is with something of a shock that one sees in these pages characteristic writing by such people as Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, E. E. Cummings, and William Carlos Williams. One had surely tagged them all with "the twenties" and had come to think of them as conventional. Yet their work remains technically in advance of the younger writers included here. Certainly, no other verse in this volume approaches Pound's work in craftsmanship or in originality. By comparison with Cummings, the poetry of Shapiro, Schwartz, Rodman, and Rukeyser seems to indi-

cate an about-turn of the advance guard, a faltering march back to prepared positions. Similarly, beside Miss Stein's "Daniel Webster," the short play here by Tennessee Williams strikes one as classically conservative. But perhaps nothing demonstrates more clearly the conclusion of the Forward March than the inclusion of a portion of Robert Penn Warren's "At Heaven's Gate." One's ear is cocked for the strains of "The Last Post"!

As the poets fall to the rear of Pound, so the fiction writers strain to catch up with Joyce and Kafka. They would appear to have little chance of success. Among them Freud and Jung are in favor. Marx no longer is. Indeed, the most notable mark of the volume is the liquidation of the "proletarian theme." The communist, when he shows up at all, is either villain or comic. Unfortunately, no new hero takes his place, no fresh compelling myth has been smelt out. For this reason the book abounds in self-conscious talent that has no place to go. It has all the restlessness and daring of second childhood.

One feels bound to say, by jingo, that in recent Canadian writing, certainly in recent Canadian poetry, there is less self-consciousness than one notes in Laughlin's stable, and far less cultural colonialism!

Malcolm Ross.

**THE WRATH OF HOMER:** L. A. MacKay; S. J. Reginald Saunders (University of Toronto Press); pp. 128; \$2.50.

Philology is justified if it increases our enjoyment and appreciation of literature proper. Professor MacKay's philological effort finds its justification in setting forth an ingenious idea, which will stimulate its readers to ask new questions of the old text, and to reread the Homeric epics with the curiosity arising from a new viewpoint. Perhaps the book would be more effective if its dominant idea were

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expressed as lucidly at the beginning, before the mass of evidence is presented, as in the final chapter. It is suggested that in the epics (leaving aside questions of authorship and date) two themes have been combined: first, the memory of a war at Troy, fought for control of the Danubian metal trade; and second, the romantic tale of an Epirote vendetta in which Achilles and Hector were the principal characters. Archaeological, linguistic and philological evidence is presented to demonstrate the importance of Western Greece in the Heroic Age; and it is suggested that heroic families associated in legend with both Epirus and the Troad (e.g., the Aeacides) may have been originally connected with the west, instead of migrating there in the *post bellum* period, as in the traditional story. The most which can be said of the scholarship of such a work upon such a topic is that its interpretative suggestions are not inconsistent with such scanty and dubious evidence as we possess. This little book can be described as imaginatively stimulating and historically plausible.

Gordon Keyes

**DEEPER INTO THE FOREST:** Roy Daniells; McClelland & Stewart (Indian File Books: 1); pp. 76; \$2.50.

**THE STRENGTH OF THE HILLS:** Robert Finch; McClelland & Stewart (Indian File Books: 2); pp. 132; \$2.75.

These are both controversial books. The individual excellences of style make the initial impact. Dr. Daniells' lines have vigor and grace, and are vivid with imagery and surprising, satisfying words; Mr. Finch catches the reader up in elegant Greek key designs, and leads him surely and swiftly through their intricacies. Even those readers who on principle will react against this initial effect

will not be able to complain that Dr. Daniells has imported a style from the days of the courtly makers, or Mr. Finch from the Gallic wit and precision of the past, to fit their respective themes today. Unmistakably, for better or for worse (but certainly for richer), both poets are so conversant with these poetic idioms that the idioms have shaped and generated their own inner worlds, which could not be articulated in any other form. And the formal beauty in each case will challenge the querulous modernist; will make him fear that his impulse to insist that the contemporary idiom must be at least as active in a poet as any traditional one is impractical and pious; will tempt him to succumb wearily to Spengler, or Ortega y Gasset, or Bob Hope. A reader curious about this problem of language may ask himself further how their styles have affected the range of subject of these two poets.

Despite the fact that both books are personal statements, they excel at opposite poles. Where Mr. Finch is most direct, where he nakedly states an inescapable focal point in experience, he makes any comment trivial, he gives an absolute. Where his theme is rather the setting, the framework of experience, he tends to generalize, and the quality of the verse falls off astoundingly. Dr. Daniells, on the other hand, blurs a direct focus with bewildering images and editorial constructions. But for him what happens in the tail of the eye becomes central, and the best of the poems, by refraction refracted, give the pure light. It is good to read the two poets together, to see the irreducible two-ness of two articulate human beings.

M. A.

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**ELIZABETH, CAPTIVE PRINCESS:** Margaret Irwin; Clarke, Irwin; pp. 246; \$3.00.

Margaret Irwin's books are proof that historical novels can be lively and interesting without being highly fictionalized or heavily interlarded with sex. In *Elizabeth, Captive Princess*, she continues the story which she began in 1945 with *Young Bess*.

The current instalment is hardly as effective as the first one because the period it covers does not make as well rounded a story. *Young Bess*, beginning with the death of Henry VIII and covering the reign of Elizabeth's young half-brother, Edward VI, centered around the conflict between Thomas and Edward Seymour, and climaxed with the execution of Tom Seymour, who was charged, among other things, with seducing the young Elizabeth. *Elizabeth, Captive Princess*, carries the story from the death of Edward VI to the marriage of Elizabeth's half-sister Mary to Prince Philip of Spain. It would probably have been better if it had covered the whole of Mary's reign: the two books are obviously preludes to the story of Elizabeth as queen, and a third prelude will be a little too much.

While somewhat lacking in unity, the novel has much to recommend it. It centres around the contrasting personalities of the three women who were possible heirs to the throne: the nineteen-year-old Elizabeth, tempestuous, witty, and shrewd; her young cousin, Lady Jane Grey, shy, studious, and pathetic; and thirty-seven-year-old Mary, conscientious, devout—and jealous of her vivid young sister. In the dangerous period when attempts were being made to overthrow Mary, Elizabeth was forced to develop into a brilliant diplomat to preserve her own life.

The characters and events are not only historically accurate but vivid and believable. While details are fictionalized, the novel as a whole gives a much more convincing picture of Tudor England than many more pretentious volumes. It can safely be recommended as an antidote for the *Forever Amber* type of historical novel. *Edith Fowke.*

**NO COWARD SOUL:** David A. MacLennan; Clarke, Irwin; pp. 244; \$2.50.

This is a book of sermons preached by Dr. MacLennan in his church, Timothy Eaton Memorial, in Toronto. Let no one imagine it is a series of dry-as-dust theological or philosophical disquisitions. The sermons are short and intensely interesting because they deal with vital, living issues. Lloyd Douglas says that many have turned to this man MacLennan for help because "He has retreaded their worn tires so that they cling more safely to the road." Douglas also says that the author is "An incurable, incorrigible optimist with an unlickable faith in the capacity of the human spirit to overcome its weaknesses." This is true, but MacLennan's optimism is not of the sentimental, wishful thinking variety, neither is it based on the vague, unrealistic humanism that seeks to establish a religion without a real God. The philosophy underlying these sermons is that there is a living, loving Almighty God, a heavenly Father and that He has revealed himself supremely in the life of Jesus Christ and that to all who seek the good, the best-life, either in personal experience or in the community or the world, the spiritual resources of the Universe are in Christ available. Many quotations from the text could be cited to illustrate this if the limitation of space would allow. The book is timely and this reviewer has no hesitation in endorsing another statement by Lloyd Douglas. "The book," he says, "is at once a sedative in the clamour and confusion of a befuddled generation and a stimulant to jaded souls who have plenty of fuel but weak ignition."

*John Coburn*

**THE PERRACOTTS:** Derek Clifford; Clarke, Irwin (Hogarth Press); pp. 223, \$2.25.

If ever, in the line of characterization, plot, and setting, a novelist bit off more than he could chew, it is Mr. Clifford. His callow first novel attempts to describe how five sisters, four of whom are living with their widowed father in a castle on the Yorkshire moors, go out into the wider world to discover, each of them, the secret of her own identity. Almost immediately it is evident that Mr. Clifford is going to fail to convince us that any of the sisters are different from each other. For the most part, no one is depicted strongly enough to engage, heartily, either the reader's sympathy or antipathy; therefore *The Perracotts* is not very interesting. Not only content to tackle the terrible problem of describing five people in a family (a problem that even Jane Austen in *Pride and Prejudice* hardly solves) Mr. Clifford lays one scene in the deep South, another scene in smart New York society and starts off the whole affair with its tea-for-blood characters in a setting more akin to *Heathcliff* and *Catherine Earnshaw*. One shudders at the cavalier way with which Mr. Clifford sets up his different stage-props, especially the Dixieland ones. The flair for dialogue with which the jacket-blurb credits Mr. Clifford may, perhaps, be illustrated by this howling line (I quote from memory): "How many affairs have you had lately?" asked Riccardella gaily of Frances." All in all, a neo-Alcottish effort that in interest and artistry never comes up to that old fairy-tale on which it is based.

*James Reaney.*

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